

Recommendations for the El Dorado County Charter

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September 29, 2009

The County Grand Jury in a special Final Report on the Status of the County Charter has recommended to both the Charter Review Committee and to the BOS that the Charter be revoked in its entirety. As a member of the Review Committee, I concur.

I believe that the Grand Jury has conducted a thorough review and has offered solid reasons for their recommendation. If the Charter Committee recommends to the BOS that the issue be placed on the ballot and if the BOS agrees, the people will decide the issue at the ballot box.

The Charter offers no significant advantage for home rule powers than those which would obtain under a General Law status. In support of this statement I ask that all Committee members and the BOS read the following:

The argument written by Noble Sprunger against the adoption of the Charter on the 1994 ballot discuss the differences between General Law and Charter law. See below:

ARGUMENT AGAINST MEASURE A (*From the 1994 Ballot – Measure A - Adopt Proposed Charter*)

El Dorado County government does not need a charter form of government and its citizens do not need a charter.

While a charter can provide some local (home rule) authority to cities, it does little to nothing to enhance county legal prerogatives. The county may only address subjects allowed by the Constitution and those subjects add nothing to local powers that cannot presently be invoked by local county ordinances.

Anything that a charter does do to local government and its constituents is negative.

1. A charter allows the Board of Supervisors a shielding mechanism to abrogate ns duly elected responsibilities by deferring any "hard" decision to the voters for a charter amendment. We are a representative form of government and have a right to politically responsible legislative action by our representatives.
2. A charter will be under constant amendment because of the above and because special interest groups will pressure the Board of Supervisors into introducing changes every election. Ask yourself why there are already four proposed amendments even before we have a charter. Our present rights to initiative and referendum already provide adequate legislative access.
3. The charter will become a hodgepodge of special laws like the charter in San Francisco and endlessly disrupt the El Dorado County Ordinance Code.
4. Any charter will provide another Pandora's Box of issues for confusion of the citizens and their duly elected representatives, and a field day for lawyers and bureaucrats.

The only county in recent time that has seen fit to pass a charter is Placer County. At this very time ij is being considered for repeal. Do not be seduced by the illusion of "home rule". Nowhere in the charter provisions are there any additional legal home rule powers not already available under general law.

Vote "No" on Measure A.

s/Noble Sprunger