

# Prop 140: No

**Summary.** Prop 140 would amend the Arizona Constitution to open primaries to all voters, regardless of party affiliation. All candidates would appear on the same ballot, which would be sent to all registered voters. The measure also makes a number of smaller changes, such as prohibiting public monies from being spent to run “political party elections.” (This change may also eliminate the role of elected precinct committee members in nominating replacements for legislators who leave office between elections.)

**Lets politicians decide too much.** Proponents of Prop 140 say it will “moderate the extremism that’s been stifling progress” on popular issues like school funding, voucher accountability, abortion care, affordable housing, water and environmental policy. But Prop 140 has a fatal flaw: instead of setting a firm number for how many candidates to advance from the primary to the general election, it says our politicians must pass laws deciding how many candidates to advance.

**Putting their thumbs on the scale.** In multi-seat races — for instance, the Arizona House of Representatives, with two elected officials per district — Prop 140 allows the legislature to choose between 4 and 7 candidates to advance to the general election. It also allows them to change the number of candidates who advance from the primary “for an office” every six years, which could be twisted to match whichever way they feel the wind is blowing politically at that time. Although a voter ranking is “taken into account” for single-seat elections, there is no requirement that voter rankings must apply to multi-seat elections.

**Gives one person too much power.** If state lawmakers fail to act, the Secretary of State gets to choose how this works. Yes, all by him- or herself. That's far too much power to be concentrated in the hands of a single partisan politician. And Prop 140's creators are well aware of this flaw. As the measure's main spokesman said, incredibly: "We don't really care what they do, because anything is better than the current system." We don't agree.

**Too risky.** It appears Prop 140 is trying to force our legislature to be sensible. This is a fool's errand and opens the door to meddling. Over the years, we've seen too much meddling come out of our legislature to give our state lawmakers the benefit of the doubt. Handing the details of our elections over to a legislature — especially one that looks anything like our current one — is a recipe for chaos.

**We recommend a NO vote.** CEBV believes the flaws of this measure outweigh its intentions. Though CEBV is open to reform of Arizona's current primary system, Prop 140 – well-intentioned though it may be – has the potential to be considerably worse than what we have now.

**Conflicts with Prop 133.** If both Prop 133 and Prop 140 pass in November, whichever one gets the most votes will be enshrined into the state constitution. **We recommend a NO vote on both measures.**

From Civic Engagement Beyond Voting, Melinda Merkel Iyer, Aug. 18, 2024 - <https://cebv.substack.com/p/cebv-2024-propositions-guide>