



Local ballot measures: Measure R

R

Appointive City Clerk

Ballot question

“Shall the office of city clerk be appointive?”

What your vote means

YES	NO
A “Yes” vote on Measure R will convert the office of the City Clerk to an appointed office.	A “No” vote on Measure R will leave the City Clerk as an elective office.

For and Against Measure R

FOR	AGAINST
s/ Ann Segerstrom and Colette Such City of Sonora Councilmembers	No argument was filed against Measure R



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Impartial Analysis

Douglas L. White, City Attorney, City of Sonora

Measure R asks Sonora voters whether the office of City Clerk for the City of Sonora (“City”) should be an appointed position rather than an elected office every 4 years. If City voters approve Measure R, the Sonora City Council (“Council”) will appoint the City Clerk on an ongoing basis following the certification of the November 3, 2020 election results. The Council placed Measure R on the ballot to establish minimal qualification requirements for the City Clerk and save City funds by eliminating the need to place the City Clerk position on a ballot every 4 years.

State law requires general law cities, such as the City, to have a City Clerk. A City Clerk may be appointed or elected. The Council can only appoint the City Clerk if voters approve a measure allowing for Council appointment. A majority of California cities have an appointed City Clerk.

The City Clerk administers local processes and municipal services such as elections and access to City records, ensuring that all local legislative action is properly executed, recorded, and archived. The City Clerk prepares the meeting agendas and minutes for Council meetings as well as for other City committees and commissions, verifies legal notices have been posted or published, accepts service of claims, lawsuits and official documents on behalf of the City, manages compliance with California conflict of interest filings, regulations, and performs other duties required by law.

As an elected office, the only requirements for the City Clerk are to be at least 18 years of age, a registered voter of the City and a resident of the City. Once elected, the City Clerk can be only removed at a general election or by a recall. The City cannot terminate the City Clerk at any time for unsatisfactory performance.

If Measure R is approved, the Council can establish minimum training and experience requirements to ensure that the City Clerk can perform the duties of the office. The Council can remove the requirement that the City Clerk be a resident of the City to attract the best qualified candidates. The Council can also conduct regular performance reviews of the City Clerk and can terminate the City Clerk at any time for unsatisfactory performance.

Measure R will save the City funds by eliminating the need to hold an election for the City Clerk every 4 years. As an elected office, the City must conduct an election for the office every 4 years and incur the costs of the election, even if there is a lack of candidates. In the previous general municipal election, no one ran for City Clerk.

A "YES" vote on Measure R will convert the office of the City Clerk to an appointed office.

A "NO" vote on Measure R will leave the City Clerk as an elective office.



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Arguments in support of or in opposition to the proposed laws are the opinions of the authors.

Argument for Measure R

The selection of the City Clerk should be based on qualifications and experience and NOT the result of a political campaign.

Demands on the City Clerk have evolved over past decades. The complexities of the position have increased and the technical skills and knowledge required are significant. The Clerk's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- administration of the City's records, including Agenda management and accurate documentation of City Council meeting Minutes,
- election oversight,
- compliance with conflict of interest and campaign disclosure regulations,
- understands and is comprised of Federal and State laws.

But under California law, the only requirements of a candidate to serve as an *elected* City Clerk are:

- candidate is at least 18 years old,
- candidate is registered to vote,
- candidate is a resident living within the boundaries of the City of Sonora City.

Sonora deserves to have a skilled professional perform these vital responsibilities. The City was fortunate to have a skilled and dedicated City Clerk for many years, who performed with integrity and professionalism, but with an elected City Clerk, we cannot assure that past good fortune will be repeated.

Logic demands that the City Clerk be selected from extensive screening to recruit and hire the person with the strongest technical, administrative and professional skills. An *appointed* City Clerk can be held accountable to perform to the same standards as City Administrative staff.

Seventy-two percent (72%) of California cities now *appoint* rather than *elect* their City Clerks. We join many committed to local government and encourage you to support this critical change. Your **YES vote on Measure R** ensures the essential duties of the City Clerk are performed by a qualified professional.

The Sonora City Council endorses **VOTE YES ON MEASURE R**.

s/ Ann Segerstrom and Colette Such,
City of Sonora Councilmembers

Argument Against Measure R

No argument was filed against Measure R