

Patrick Barton for consideration for service on the election commission.

1. Patrick Barton, home address: 130 Appleton St., Cambridge, MA 02138, Ward 9 Precinct 1. business address 107 Avenue Louis Pasteur, Boston MA 02115, 617-868-2365, bartonemail@aol.com.

2. I have volunteered many hours for candidates, in Cambridge municipal elections, for Democratic candidates in Cambridge, and other parts of Massachusetts, and also in other states. I am schedules to collect signature for ballot access on the day of my Ward 9 caucus. If serving in the Election Commission will require that I adjust this activity, I will do that.

I grew up in Cambridge. Every vote I have cast has been in an election in Cambridge, sometimes via absentee ballot. For example, I was very sure to vote absentee in the January 2010 special election for U.S. Senate; I wish more Democrats had voted that time.

In 2016, I was elected to my Ward 9 Democratic party committee with write-in votes, subsequently also elected at a committee meeting. I attend Ward 9 committee meetings.

I am told by reliable sources that I have among the most consistent voting records in Cambridge. My polling place has changed several times over the years, my home address has not.

I work for Harvard Medical School. I started there directly after volunteering for a candidate in the special Democratic primary election in 2013 for Mass. 5th district in the U.S. House of Representatives. It is the district in which I live. I was recently re-elected as a union representative at my workplace. I receive and distribute packages for persons using a database and email system I developed. I have distributed absentee ballots for US, and for other countries, to their intended recipients. The demanding graduate student population, wants items processed the same day.

Earlier this century, for many years, I worked for two separate university graduate school admissions departments, this included checking credentials. My present and past employment has core demand of working with lists of persons and keeping their details separate from each other; applicants can have the same name. Lists of applicants can be compared to voter lists. I have worked with the voter database Vote Builder, I have seen persons with the same name and address but different birthdays, and this can be explained as parent and child, or cousins.

I have not concluded from my daily contact with busy university student population that there is a popular strong motivation within that group to vote in local elections, even in the presidential election. I am sure there are other opinions.

When I was small child, my parents and neighbors supported a school committee campaign, and a slate of candidates; this was an early exposure to proportional representation. I was curious to know why yard signs all had "#1" on them. My mother ran a campaign for a successful candidate in Cambridge. In the seventh grade at the Tobin school, Mr. Sullivan taught us about proportional representation as part of the curriculum. During the fore mentioned examples, the count was still done by hand at the Longfellow school. Our teacher Mr. Sullivan illustrated how a count might be done with examples of boxes.

I have been a campaign volunteer many times, often on Election Day in Cambridge. I have been a poll watcher inside several different polling places; this has given me expertise and education about the process. I have "closed" a poll for campaigns, getting the data counts after voting has concluded. I have been a delegate to two state party conventions. I was a full time

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volunteer fellow on the Markey for US Senate campaign, special election in 2013. I have worked on voter registration drives. This year, I attended the Democratic Campaign Institute in Lowell, a production of the state party,

3. I wish to serve my community. I have lots of experience with voting and elections in Cambridge, I shall share this if I serve on the commission. I have seen turnout go down over the years, I am concerned about that.

4. We have a transient population. I wish to see participation increase. Efforts to increase participation should consider how they might influence the political process. For example, a participation campaign might target new residents as they interface with government to get a parking permit; however, this might skew participation toward the car owning cohort of the population, leaving those who use other means of transportation under represented on the voter rolls. On Election Day, any polling place should be able to inform any member of the public not only if they vote at that poll, but if they are registered to vote in Cambridge and where their poll is located. The early voting process from 2016 should be considered for expansion.

Computer animated video is a powerful education tool for instructing the public and voters on our election process.

Beginning late in the last century the Internet revolution made information tremendously easier to access, this has been expanded by the wireless smart phone. The public should understand that today, and before the Internet revolution, it is incumbent upon them to be active in consuming information to participate in elections. The government has a duty to inform. It is not the role of government to demand that a person, or the public, cast votes. The Mass. Voters' Bill of Rights can be posted at polls, it can also be posted and found 24/7 on the Internet.

5. With a very large budget and staff, the city could maintain an up to the minute accurate list of voters. However, I don't advocate this. Perhaps, a regularly scheduled "check your registration status" program should be done. Erroneously dropping voters should be avoided as the highest priority. The fact that departed residents might still appear on the voting roles is not sufficient cause to conclude that the process is tarnished.

6. Staff should be eligible for legal employment in Cambridge. Persons that have violated election or campaign regulations shall not be hired. There have been convictions of voting fraud in Mass. in recent years that have included sentencing. General competence and understanding of the foundational importance of elections are requirements for working at the election commission; the voting list is not just another list such as members of a health club.

7. Elections should not be considered a business enterprise. They are a core service of government, a foundation. They are, however, paid for by public funds. Efficiencies should be sought, such as using technology and less paper; but, these cannot comprise the social equity that an election process demands. Eliminating paper entirely would be very green, and might save much money. However, such steps seem likely to make the elections less secure from mischief and mishap.

8. The Election Commission should meet the community where the community is located; this might mean having meetings at night, and/or at different locations around the city. Perhaps, web casting can forward this mission. I have observed that Election Day workers fail to speak loud enough when checking in voters. One worker even objected to it on privacy grounds, I

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overheard this while poll watching. At the last election, I heard a member of the election commission emphasize to poll workers to speak loudly and clearly.

I believe enough Election Day workers can be recruited and trained from within Cambridge, but if need be staff should be hired from outside. Hiring local residents has many benefits.

9. Each poll should be an information resource about all other polls, and registered voters. On Election Day, the public should be able to learn from any poll location if they are registered in Cambridge, and what poll they should use. Commissioners should observe and correct problems on Election Day. I favor optical scan voting devices in Cambridge elections. Keeping paper ballots is vital to avoid mishaps.

10. It would be best to avoid recounts by evaluating the voting process to improve it as much as possible. Strive to make the initial election result as high quality and robust as possible. Recounts are time consuming and expensive. Better to use quality control to reduce the number of disputed ballots. The ballot machines should be made sensitive to detect possible faulty ballots at the time the vote is cast; it is better eliminate problems there. The city should consult with the vendors of election equipment, the printers of ballots, the print outs the poll workers use, and so on. Such vendors should be informed that our election system can produce tantalizingly close results, these can drive up the demand for recounts. The vendors might provide adjustments to the process to achieve better results. The city is the customer of these vendors, and should demand high quality customer service.

11. It is a fact that undocumented persons are members of our community, the Commonwealth, and the U.S.A. The city government does have a duty to guide any resident with obtaining any documents of residency, citizenship, and registering to vote, that that individual is qualified for.

This expansion of the voting franchise to the undocumented in Cambridge has been examined by city hall before, and the issue has been determined to be counter to the Constitution of Mass. Has something changed? Perhaps, a change in law or court case has occurred that I am not aware of. One of us, or all of us might want to allow the undocumented immigrants to vote; however, changes at the state level seem necessary to achieve this.

If the city were to unilaterally allow undocumented immigrants, or undocumented residents, to vote I would be very concerned that election results might be invalidated by a legal challenge.

Personal risk: Allowing and encouraging undocumented immigrants to vote might put those persons at risk of action by the authorities; would voting have to come with a warning label? Would the city want to put persons at risk of deportation? Could evidence of Cambridge voting by an undocumented person be used against them in court, at a hearing, and such like, either in the U.S. or another country?

Would undocumented immigrants be confused and think they are obliged to vote, or think that participation somehow forwards their aim of getting legal residency or citizenship? Cambridge does not have the authority to grant a Green Card or U.S. citizenship. What form of positive identification is acceptable from an undocumented immigrant for election purposes?

There are residents of Cambridge that are convinced that foreign governments or actors tampered with the national November 2016 election. It seems that allowing undocumented persons to vote would expose elections to tampering, or at the very least increase conspiracy theories.

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Attempting to lower the voting age has similar problems just discussed. It is worthy of consideration if political support can be shown. Would under-age-voters need parental permission to vote?

Same-day voter registration must be considered, this seems to be in the realm of state government. Perhaps, the Commonwealth could enable municipalities to have same day voting registration for municipal election as a local option; it would be a start.

There might be exceptional cases where photo ID for voting could be requested. Identity theft is a fact.

12. For the national 2016 election I was able to witness the benefits of Early Voting at the Cambridge Water Department and other locations. Voters from numerous polling places voted at the Water Dept., rather than visiting their assigned poll on Election Day only.

Because of our proportional representation municipal elections are different from those for national office, Early Voting might be harder to support. We should proceed with carefully with Early Voting for municipal election. Perhaps, Early Voting should be attempted only for School Committee at first; with a complete evaluation following that election.