

MAKE ALL VOTES COUNT DC
Treasurer, Philip Pannell
1205 33rd Place SE
Washington, DC 20019



Hello@MakeAllVotesCountDC.org

MakeAllVotesCountDC.org
Facebook, Instagram, Twitter icons @AllVotesCountDC

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CONTACT: Porter Bowman / (203) 703-8485 / Press@MakeAllVotesCountDC.org

The YES on 83 Campaign Submits Over 40,000 Signatures to D.C. Board of Elections Today *Broad and Strong Support from D.C. Voters Across All 8 Wards*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the YES on 83 Campaign, formally known as Make All Votes Count DC and the sponsors of [Initiative 83](#), is submitting 8,528 petitions that contain over 40,000 signatures from District of Columbia voters to the D.C. Board of Elections.

Initiative 83, also known as “*The Ranked Choice Voting and Open The Primary Elections to Independent Voters Act of 2024*,” would allow registered independents to participate in D.C.’s currently-closed primary elections and implement ranked choice voting for District elections beginning in June 2026. The 40,000 collected signatures came from all eight wards, with at least 5% of registered voters signing in each ward, respectively, and over 7% in total District-wide. These totals put the YES on 83 Campaign’s submission well ahead of the required thresholds—approximately 22,500 signatures, with at least 5% participation in five wards—and one step closer towards getting Initiative 83 on voters’ ballots this November.

“Such broad support of Initiative 83 across the District is not just empowering, but a clear sign that D.C. voters are hungry for more equitable and inclusive elections,” said Lisa D. T. Rice, Proposer of Initiative 83, native Washingtonian, and Ward 7 ANC Commissioner. “These numbers reflect a recurring theme that our dedicated grassroots team has been hearing over the past six months: that the status quo is anything but democratic. Initiative 83 would change that.”

If passed in November, over 73,000 disenfranchised independent voters—roughly 1 out of 6 District voters—would be able to vote in taxpayer-funded primary elections for the first time since Home Rule. Politicians would also have to earn over 50% to win, through the proven reform of ranked choice voting. With ranked ballots, successful candidates build broad coalitions and appeal to more communities, including communities east of the river, who are often ignored under the current system.

“D.C. voters have expressed strong support for Initiative 83 and what it stands for. Many people we’ve spoken with are well-informed and eager for change,” says Kris Furnish, Field Director and Steering Committee member at Make All Votes Count DC. “For those who were unfamiliar with the initiative, they quickly understood why this reform is needed in the District after speaking with one of our petition circulators.”

The campaign adopted the Initiative 83 petition on January 10, 2024, and over the last 6 months nearly 200 trained circulators spoke to tens of thousands of voters across all 8 wards. From farmers’ markets to post offices, grocery stores to metro stations, circulators met voters where they were, ensuring information about Initiative 83 reached every corner of the District.

“The reforms outlined in Initiative 83 better reflect the will of all voters,” says Brian Strege, a Make All Votes Count DC Steering Committee member and Ward 8 ANC Commissioner. “With over one out of fifteen D.C. voters signing the Initiative 83 ballot access petition, we are confident this reflection will manifest at the ballot box later this year,” concludes Mr. Strege.

Once the ballot access petitions are submitted today, the D.C. Board of Elections has 30 days to validate the signatures and confirm the campaign met the statutory requirements to place Initiative 83 on the November general election ballot. If Initiative 83 is approved by a majority of voters in the general election on November 5, it will then need to be certified by the D.C. Board of Elections in early December. Then the Chairman of the D.C. Council would transmit the law to the 119th Congress in January to begin the 30 legislative day review period and likely become law by early March 2025. The first election that would feature the reforms outlined in Initiative 83 would be the District’s primary election in June 2026.

For more information about the YES on 83 Campaign, visit: www.MakeAllVotesCountDC.org.

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