

4/11/2013

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Protect Democracy:

Keep Austin Energy in the hands of voters,
and don't create an UN-ELECTED BOARD

An Un-Elected Board for Austin Energy would be less accountable

- ▶ We would lose direct accountability to the public
- ▶ RISKS: Puts our green programs and low-income programs at risk, and risks funding for our streets, parks, libraries, clinics and public safety.
- ▶ Austin Energy is our city's largest asset, worth \$3.9 billion - and it is owned by citizens.
- ▶ The accountability we have now has helped get lower electric rates and has helped delay rate increases - since energy efficiency allowed us to avoid building another coal plant
- ▶ Why risk losing accountability?

Public Hearing & Vote Needed

- ▶ A public hearing was promised on Valentine's Day.
- ▶ Please honor this promise
- ▶ In fact, hold public meetings around town to explain to take public input
- ▶ Then allow citizens to vote on whether to change to an un-elected board.
- ▶ Don't support bills that cut out the public vote (Charter Amendment)

Real Analysis of Impacts Needed

- ▶ Only a cursory study has been done – a “make-believe study” –that is a compilation of data, but has no analysis as to what impacts could result from changing to an un-elected board
- ▶ This is reckless, especially with our city's largest asset at stake.

Voices That Have Been Heard – and Haven't been Heard

- ▶ The Kahn report interviewed former utility managers who think an "independent" board is a good idea
- ▶ They said things like – I might have been able to get more nuclear power for Austin if we'd had an "independent board."
- ▶ Not a single city council member or any citizen from a utility with a similar board

Major Problems with Ordinance

- ▶ Lacking ethics provisions
- ▶ Lacking procedure for future replacement of Board members
- ▶ Lacking guarantees to keep current level of transfer to the general fund
- ▶ Very high level can be approved by Board – \$100 million
- ▶ No penalties if the board performs badly or acts against policies
- ▶ 15 + conflicts with City Charter

Vote NO on the ORDINANCE

- ▶ Keep Accountability for Austin Energy and Don't Create an UN-ELECTED BOARD
- ▶ Then improve things by:
 - ▶ Improve utility performance with monthly meetings
- ▶ Allow competitive salaries so we can attract and retain the best management possible

Who Favors this Change and Why?

- ▶ The only support for this governance change at City Council on Valentine's Day was from CCARE -
 - ▶ As of 2009 - members included:
AMD, BOMA, Brandywine Realty Trust, CB Richard Ellis, Data Foundry, Dell, Freescale, Highland Mall, IBM, National Instruments, SACHEM, Samsung, Seton Family of Hospitals, Spansion, St. David's and SVTC.
- ADDRESS: C/O Austin Chamber of Commerce