



Thank You for Standing with Prop 140 – Reflections and Next Steps

A Setback But Not The End For Election Reform

You are getting this note as a supporter of Prop 140, but most importantly you are getting this note to acknowledge your significant role in this giant effort to upend traditional politics in Arizona.

Our team cannot thank you enough for the time, energy and treasure you put into Make Elections Fair Arizona. It is incredibly humbling to have received the amount of local support we did for Prop 140. We broke every record for domestic fundraising for an Arizona initiative. Your incredible generosity, passion and belief in our mutual cause propelled us forward.

“We are immensely appreciative to the more than 1 million voters who cast a ‘yes’ vote for Proposition 140, advocating for a fairer, more inclusive democratic process. Their support fuels our hope for an Arizona that truly upholds the founding ideals of our nation—that all are created equal and deserve to have a voice in shaping our democracy,” Sarah Smallhouse, campaign chair.

While the outcome was not what we hoped, we wanted to share our reflections on the challenges we faced and the lessons learned that will guide our path forward.

1. Doing Hard Things

This was never an easy thing to do. To challenge both major political parties and an electorate that is so tribally divided is a significant undertaking. [The list of our opponents](#) were a testament to the entrenched political divisions which currently govern our Country.

Reflecting on JFK’s famous “moonshot” speech, we took on this challenge not because it was easy:

“We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard, because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we are

willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one which we intend to win, and the others, too.”

It took the U.S. 8 years from the time of that speech to put a man on the moon. Doing hard things takes time.

2. Competing Initiative

The Legislature sponsored a competing initiative, Prop 133 to [intentionally confuse voters](#), and it worked. We must anticipate that they will do that again but that is our reality. That being said, over 1.3 million voters opposed Proposition 133, rejecting the Legislature’s attempt to cement partisan primaries in our state constitution. These outcomes signal a widespread desire for a more representative and forward-looking election system in Arizona.

3. Litigation Nightmare

From the outset, we were entangled in a series of legal battles, taking us all the way to the Arizona Supreme Court—twice. This delayed our campaign’s public outreach and diverted resources away from framing our message. During this time, our opponents labeled Prop 140 as a “confusing, out-of-state effort” to “California Arizona,” which muddled our message and diverted critical funds toward legal defense. Our legal team did an outstanding job, but courtrooms are not the ideal place to wage a public campaign.

4. Framing

For a campaign like ours to succeed in today’s hyper-partisan environment, our message needs to rise above politics and speak to core American values that resonates with all voters.

The Make Elections Fair effort did that at the outset but not deeply enough with voters to survive the inevitable mud fest which our opponents threw at us. By the time the calvary came over the hill, the enemy was inside our razor wire and wreaking havoc with our public perception.

5. Complexity of the Initiative

Our team would like to discuss this at length with our supporters. A simpler framework – advocating for a top-two general election and fair treatment of independent candidates and voters – would have resonated more. [Please reach out with ideas and thoughts to improve on for future efforts.](#)

The committee extends our gratitude to our generous donors who empowered our campaign on our strenuous journey to get the initiative on the ballot and withstand multiple lawsuits from the opposition.

We also owe immense thanks to our dedicated and spirited volunteers who gave us countless hours of their time to get Prop 140 across the finish line. The voices behind every op-ed, every rally cry, and every cheer were vital to this victory.

Thank you to our many local advocates, and our national partners who helped bring a spotlight to our state and created a far-reaching echo chamber of support for Prop 140.

“Though the results were not as we hoped, Arizona will continue to move forward. We will regroup and work toward a stronger, more representative democracy in the years to come,” Paul Johnson campaign co-chair.

This was a battle well fought, and we’re proud of the dedication and resilience our team demonstrated. We’ve listened to voters, and we’re determined to refine our approach, returning with a proposal that resonates with Arizonans even more strongly. [Please stay in touch and let us know if you'd like to be part of our future efforts.](#)

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Make Elections Fair AZ is a non-partisan, citizen led effort to make Arizona’s primary elections more fair. Our mission is to restore progress and civility by putting the interests of citizens above partisan politics. We firmly believe that our elections should be a way to unify Arizonans, regardless of party affiliation, to address the great challenges facing our state and country.

Supported by Make Elections Fair Committee, is an Arizona based 501(c)(4) organization. To learn more and to join our effort visit: makeelectionsfairaz.com. Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).