

# Protect Our City Charter

## Vote No on Issue 9 – the Passenger Rail Issue

The Coalition to Protect the City Charter opposes the November, 2009 Cincinnati Charter Amendment Issue # 9. The Coalition includes the Charter Committee, Chamber of Commerce, Cincinnati, and the League of Women Voters

The city charter is Cincinnati's version of the constitution. The charter should be a fundamental set of principles by which our government operates. In the past and in the future, it has and will be necessary to make changes to the charter to accommodate the changing needs of the city. But using the charter as a vehicle for binding charter amendments that handcuff the city manager, the mayor, and city council on specific issues within city government is not right.

The City Charter should provide for the flexible operation of government and should not restrict City Council's legislative authority on specific issues. The proposed amendment is too specific for a Charter.

The Coalition further believes that using a Charter amendment to require a vote on or to prevent funding of any specific project is simply bad governance. We elect our council members to make these decisions.

Vote No on Issue 9 – the Passenger Rail Issue  
Paid for by Citizens to Protect the Charter.  
Michael Goldman – Treasurer.  
One Garfield Place, Cincinnati 45202

### Reasons To Stop These Threats to Our Charter

#### LACK OF FLEXIBILITY

Fixing matters in the charter restricts the city's flexibility to respond to changing conditions. The city needs the ability to respond promptly to changes in technology or political opportunities, such as application deadlines for state and federal funds.

#### ENDLESS CAMPAIGNS

Unnecessary charter amendments cause time and effort to be diverted from positive improvements to our city. It is unclear where this trend will stop if unabated.

#### LOSS OF GOOD CANDIDATES

Government by ballot initiative will inhibit the city's ability to attract talented and competent council members if their hands are being tied by continuous issue elections.

#### PARALYZE DECISION-MAKING

City council members are elected to make decisions on behalf of voters as outlined in the charter. Ballot initiatives that target selective issues tend to paralyze council decision-making by preempting and second-guessing council's efforts.

#### COSTLY

Government by ballot initiative can be a costly way to make decisions both in terms of elections and in terms of lost opportunities.

#### CALIFORNIA STYLE GRIDLOCK

The proposed amendments will eventually result in a government by referendum model that developed in California to the detriment of governance in that state.



**Charter Committee**

