

Proposition B, the St. Louis City Democratic Central Committee, and the Boogeyman

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The [National Association for the Advancement of Colored People](#) (NAACP), and related groups, organized support from white and black Americans for passage of federal Anti-lynching legislation; and had Rex Sinquefield (the hypothetical Boogeyman) been one of our financial supporters the St. Louis Democratic Central Committee would have opposed the legislation. And the same seems to hold true for Proposition B; our proposition to move the city's municipal election dates from March and April to August and November - coinciding with existing state election dates. Other cities that changed election dates saw significant increases in voter participation and saved millions of tax dollars. The history of Proposition B is no real secret; several years ago after reading a study titled 'Race and the Reelection of the Longest Serving Mayor of St. Louis' by P. Frances Gouzien David C. Kimball (University of Missouri St. Louis), it's empirical conclusions - *"that the rules and timing of the mayoral primary election in St. Louis favors white candidates; turnout in St. Louis elections remains skewed toward wealthy, educated, and white voters; raising questions about the equal representation of competing policy preferences and priorities in St. Louis government; and that voter turnout declined from over 86,000 voters in 2001 to just under 45,000 voters in 2013"* - warranted action from the St. Louis City Branch of the NAACP. Proposition B fits exactly with the mission of the NAACP as it relates to increasing voter participation (especially for underserved populations). The fact that Rex Sinquefield (along with others) agreed to financially assist the NAACP with this issue does not validate the recent actions of the St. Louis Democratic Central Committee to oppose Prop B and lie about its rationale and origin. At a recent joint meeting held by the 9th & 20th wards a spoke person for the St. Louis Democratic Central Committee laid out the Committee's unanimous rationale for opposing Proposition B. The Committee's spokesperson eventually spilled the beans and stated that a primary reason for opposing Proposition B was their concern that lower ballot candidates would lose out on campaign contributions if the mayoral primary election was held on the August ballot; by the way, the lower ballot candidates on the August primary ballot are the members of the Democratic Central Committee. Thus the St. Louis Democratic Central Committee voted in its interest, not that of the voters, which is probably why their spokesperson repeatedly invoked how much money Rex Sinquefield (the hypothetical Boogeyman) had contributed to the effort as the rallying cry as to why not to support a proposition that increases voter participation and decreases the amount of money wasted on the March primary and April general elections. The spokesperson also raised the concern about the impact of moving the mayoral primary election would have on the school board elections; lets be clear, when was the last time you received a mailer from the Central Committee pushing for greater participation in the April elections for school board candidates. As a matter of fact, after the March primary, the majority if not all of the Democratic candidates have little or no opposition, thus the April general election participation is worse than March. Moving the mayoral primary election to August would leave the school board elections as the main focus for the April elections and result in those races getting the attention that they deserved, and have yet to receive from the Democratic Central Committee whom primary purpose is to get out the vote -

and it would save the city around \$500,000 during each election cycle. Ironically, the mailer sent out by the Democratic Central Committee stated in writing two reasons why Proposition B was "wrong for St. Louis," they called it a "back door attempt by billionaire Rex Sinquefeld to control our city," that's a lie...Proposition B is an NAACP effort to increase voter participation (especially minority participation) in response to the P. Frances Gouzien and David C. Kimball study, we solicited financial support from Rex and others. They also claimed that Proposition B was a "step towards defunding important city services," another lie...Proposition B will create a more effective utilization of tax dollars to fund elections, instead of spending millions on elections with voter participation that has dropped from 86,000 in 2001 to less than 45,000 in 2013, we can concentrate our spending on August and November election cycle, saving millions over the years.