

Peoria Times
Dear Editor,

You showed “staunch” support for voter rights in your December 15 commentary about the Peoria City Council’s vote to mandate curbside recycling.

Quote: “Sure, maybe it should have gone back to the voters. But the city council made its first mistake in 2001 by sending it to a vote of the people. Whatever happened to representative government?”

My question to you is: Whatever happened to voter rights?

I apologize for the lack of humility that you say I displayed. I do not claim to be an authority on voter rights but I do pledge to fight on its behalf. In 2001 the city council gave Peorians the right to vote on the curbside issue. Five years later, four council members took it away.

This “take-away” was justified by a statistical survey and the majority’s desire to do the right thing. No survey can replace a vote by the people, and disenfranchising the voters is the wrong way to do the “right thing.”

I am also confused why you believe that adding another ballot issue would be too much for voters to “plow through.”

Many of us grumbled at the length of the November ballot, but in the end we were happy to have our votes count on so many important issues. Any time I get an opportunity to cast a ballot it reaffirms my confidence in the strength of our American democracy.

The citizens were steam-rolled on this issue. If Mayor John Keegan would not allow a council member to ask questions about the cost of the curbside plan, then what chance do my neighbors have to get their questions answered?

You say I may have backed myself “into a corner” by passionately standing up for voter rights, implying that there will be some future council backlash or payback. I’m shocked at this interpretation. Our council is made up of dedicated public servants who have agreed to disagree from time-to-time.

It is not in the public’s best interest to hold grudges. It is in their best interest, however, to ensure full discussion and honest opinion. They’ll get nothing less from me.

Sincerely,
Dave Pearson
Peoria City Council
Ironwood District
623-776-6599

