



Citizens Project would like to address some remarks made at the city's press conference in response to the lawsuit we filed with Common Cause and the League of Women Voters of the Pikes Peak Region:

We did not want to file a lawsuit. We notified the City that its current election schedule raised concerns and the goal was to resolve the issue collaboratively. When that did not happen, filing this case became the appropriate next step under the statute. The racial disparity in voter turnout is a problem we take seriously, and so we took action. The City did not dispute the fact that April elections produce lower turnout and a wider disparity between white voters and Black and Hispanic voters. Colorado State Voting Rights Act (COVRA) is a new law we're working with, but these disparities are not new. The City's own data shows that April elections have consistently lower turnout and wider racial disparities than November elections.

Election timing affects not only participation, but also how public resources are utilized. Off-cycle seasons carry additional costs due to the City having to administer a stand-alone election, rather than coordinating with the November cycle used for state and federal races. Aligning these elections would allow the City to make use of an existing system, reducing duplication and improving efficiency. The city also spent over



\$700,000 fighting our coalition on the Federal version of this action four years ago, and is continuing to spend taxpayer dollars fighting the change rather than working with us.

We reject the city's assertion that voters cannot think about making local and federal decisions simultaneously, or that the Spring odd year timing allows for more appropriate focus on "hyper local issues." Voters already decide county, state, and federal offices on the same ballot in even years, and the City of Colorado Springs has itself referred local ballot questions to that same ballot. We agree with city officials that local democracy matters, but democracy starts with involvement, and that involvement is diminished with our odd-year election cycle.

This lawsuit is about making sure that everyone has an equal chance to participate in local democracy. COVRA focuses on protecting voter participation, not election outcomes. Speaking up for voter access is a core part of who we are, and we will continue advocating for inclusive and fair election systems that better represent our communities.