Understanding the Lehigh County Election Board Ballot Question

A nonpartisan voter-education guide to what would change - and what would stay the same.

BALLOT QUESTION

"Shall the Lehigh County Home Rule Charter be amended to expand the membership of the Election and Registration Commission from 3 voting members to 5 voting members, consisting of 2 members from each of the two largest political affiliations in the County, and 1 member from the third-largest political affiliation (inclusive of non-affiliated/independent), and to revise the appointment process to provide residents the opportunity to apply for the Commission?"

What is the Election & Registration Commission?

Lehigh County's Election & Registration Commission performs the county board-of-elections responsibilities assigned by Pennsylvania law. Those duties include important parts of election administration such as polling-place oversight, election procedures, canvassing returns, and the county's role in certifying results. **The ballot question changes the Commission's governance - not Pennsylvania's voting laws.**

CURRENT	IF APPROVED
3	**5**
VOTING MEMBERS	**VOTING MEMBERS**
County Executive or designee	**2** - largest political affiliation
1 member associated with the leading political party	**2** - second-largest affiliation
1 member associated with the second-leading political party	**1** - third-largest affiliation
Appointment pathway: party nominee lists + Board of Commissioners appointment	**Appointment pathway:** residents may apply for membership; Board of Commissioners makes appointments

YES	NO
Amend the charter: expand the Commission to 5 voting members, represent the 3 largest affiliations using a 2-2-1 allocation, and open an application pathway for residents.	Do not amend the charter through this question; the existing 3-member structure and current appointment provisions remain.

What would NOT change?

✓ Who is eligible to vote	✓ Pennsylvania voter-registration requirements
✓ Primary-election rules	✓ Mail-in and absentee voting laws
✓ Voting-system requirements	✓ Election dates and polling hours
✓ Federal voting-rights protections	

Why is this a ballot question?

Lehigh County voters adopted a Home Rule Charter in 1975. The Charter establishes the structure of the Election & Registration Commission, so changing that structure requires a charter amendment approved by county voters. Pennsylvania law continues to govern the Commission's election-administration duties. The proposed change would prevent any one political affiliation from holding a majority of the five voting seats, remove current elected officials from voting membership on the Commission, and open the application process to county residents who are not nominated by a political party

THE BOTTOM LINE: This question is about **who serves on Lehigh County's Election & Registration Commission and how members are selected.** It does not rewrite state or federal voting rules.

Voter education handout | Sources to consult: Lehigh County Home Rule Charter §605; Pennsylvania Election Code, Article III; official ballot-question text.