

A Referendum Partnership & Process Proven in 2018



EOS & Cor Go 5-for-5 in the General Election

After forming an innovative partnership to pass referendums in late 2017 and refining it in the 2018 Primary, we fully tested our process in the 2018 General Election. We ran five unique referendum efforts, winning all five with an average margin of victory of 27%. This included passing a tax increase in a minority majority and low income district, winning a referendum in an overwhelmingly conservative district that had rejected 3 previous referendums, and defeating a referendum despite historic pro-referendum voter turnout.

Verdict: the partnership between EOSullivan Consulting and Cor Strategies is a success. The unique process we developed for referendums is a winning formula.



Won referendum by

46%

Wheeling District 21:

Passing a Tax Increase in a Minority District >>>

D21 sought significant funding for facility improvements. This referendum was extra challenging because it was a tax increase in a community frustrated with property taxes, with a majority minority voting population consisting of a significant number of lower-income households.

We were successful and voters overwhelmingly approved the referendum 73% to 27%. The winning margin, over 46%, was the largest margin of victory of any referendum in the county and surrounding region.

McHenry District 156:

Winning in a Very Conservative Anti-Tax Community >>>

D156 had ambitious plans, but their community had overwhelmingly rejected three previous referendums (35%-65% in 2013, 27%-73% in 2010, & 29%-71% in 2010). Making matters more difficult, they had under 3 months to run our entire 8 month community engagement process and no campaign infrastructure in place.

We overcame the challenges and passed the referendum by nearly 13% (56%-44%). Making this more impressive, two other referendums were on the ballot in that area and both went down by large margins (31%-69% and 39%-61%).





44%

Largest margin of victory on any referendum in the county

Wheaton District 200:

Rebuilding Trust and Support in the Community >>>

D200 had to make certain upgrades to their facilities to comply with state and federal mandates, but the community had rejected the project as part of referendums in 2013 (by 19%) and 2017 (by 9%). Significant opposition had built up in the community as a result.

With less than 3 months to conduct efforts that would usually take over a year, we helped the district repair their relationship with the community and passed a referendum 72% to 28% that allowed them to move forward. This was the largest margin of victory (44%) of any referendum in the county.



Won referendum by

23%



Harper College:

Approving a Referendum with a Hefty Price Tag >>>

Harper was seeking \$180 million in funding, an easier price tag for voters to swallow when it's for their local neighborhood schools. In addition, the college's huge district (nearly the size of a congressional district) yet comparatively-limited budget made it challenging to run our typical program.

Despite those challenges, we were able to win convincingly, 62%–38%. The total winning margin of 23% was over double Harper's winning margin in 2008, and it was achieved while spending 10% less than the previous decade's campaign.



Defeated referendum by

80%

Hinsdale District 86:

Defeating a Referendum in a Pro-Referendum Electorate >>>

While our preferred position is to be working to pass a community-driven, fiscally responsible referendum, unfortunately units of government sometimes do not exemplify those qualities.

We defeated this referendum 54% to 46% with a positive campaign that stressed a desire to work together moving forward. Encouragingly, since the election we've seen positive steps by the district and community to work together to move their schools forward in a fairer, more fiscally responsible manner.

This win further proved our abilities. This was the only school referendum to lose in the entire region, achieved against a well-funded and organized vote yes campaign in an election that saw an historic pro-referendum voter turnout.

Get in touch with our team to discuss how we can help your community with a successful referendum.



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