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To the Editor:

The League of Women Voters of the Morris Area, alongside many partners, members, and volunteers, is calling for a fair, neutral, and accessible Primary ballot design that does not exert undue influence over voters' selections. As the New Jersey Legislature takes up the task of redesigning our ballots, it's essential that they strive to create a fair ballot that offers all candidates an equal opportunity to be elected.

A fair ballot is a simple ballot that is clear and easy to understand without unnecessary design elements that could influence voters' choices. The best way to do this is to implement an office block layout for all future elections. An office block layout groups all candidates running for a particular office in one block rather than grouping them in columns with the prime position on the ballot hand selected by party insiders. No other state has this type of party insider bias on its Primary election ballot.

A neutral ballot is essential for fair elections and advantages must not be given to party backed candidates who are awarded the favorable "county line." Instead, the order of candidates on the ballot should be automated and randomized by voting precinct, so that no candidate is given special advantage.

To achieve the truly transparent redesign process that the NJ Assembly Committee members have said they value, more public hearings must be held and announced weeks in advance. Any proposed legislation should reflect the will of the voters and be shared with the public with ample notice and opportunity to comment on the legislation.

We urge the New Jersey Legislature to prioritize these changes and create a fair and transparent voting environment that honors voters and the democratic process.

Kathy Abbott, Patra Brown and Barbara Kuppersmith, Co-Presidents
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