

Impartial Analysis By City Attorney

State law allows the City Council of a general law city such as the City of Villa Park to submit measures to the City's voters. The proposed measure would direct the City Council to display the national motto "In God We Trust" in the City Council Chambers. Courts have interpreted the phrase "In God We Trust" as a secular and ceremonial expression rather than as a theological statement and therefore the City Attorney believes the use of the phrase as proposed in this measure is constitutional.

Currently, the phrase "In God We Trust" is not displayed in the City Council Chambers. This measure would change the current situation and direct the City Council to display the phrase "In God We Trust" in the City Council Chambers. The manner, location and prominence in which the phrase is displayed in the City Council Chambers is left to the reasonable discretion of the City Council. The City Council or a future City Council could subsequently change the manner, location and prominence in which the phrase is displayed in the City Council Chambers. However, it is likely that future voter approval would be required to invalidate this measure and allow the complete removal of the phrase "In God We Trust" from the City Council Chambers.

If you favor the City displaying the phrase "In God We Trust" in the City Council Chambers, you should vote "yes". If you oppose the City displaying the phrase "In God We Trust" in the City Council Chambers, you should vote "no". If the measure carries by a majority vote, the City Council will be directed to display the national motto "In God We Trust" in the City Council Chambers.