

Vote No on Article 1, Special Town Meeting: "An Act to Hold Special Election" Nov. 6, 2018

Why vote No on Article 1? Because Article 1's election calendar would exclude thousands of student voters from nominating candidates and running for Town Council. It includes **summer dates** for filing nomination papers and primary campaigning, and a **Sept. 4, 2018, Primary Vote**. Most students leave Amherst in the summer. So this would deny thousands of students their constitutional rights to be elected to Town Council, vote in the Primary, and participate meaningfully in the Town Council election.

Amherst residents aged 18 – 24 are half of Amherst's voting-age residents—and most are students. Part I, Article 9, of the Massachusetts Constitution guarantees *the right to be elected to public office* as well as *the right to vote in elections*. "[A]ll the inhabitants of this commonwealth ... have an equal right to elect officers, and to be elected, for public employments." The U.S. Constitution guarantees the right to vote under the 14th Amendment (equal protection) and 26th Amendment (voting rights for 18 to 21-year olds). Students have rights to meaningful participation, including as candidates, in the election process.

Timeline: How Article 1 would violate students' rights if Special Town Meeting approves it:

Town asks its Legislators for an unconstitutional "Special Act"	Tues., May 1	
	sometime in May?	<i>If</i> Legislature passes Special Act by June 1:
Nomination Petitions available	Fri., June 1	Most dorms closed. Hard for student "Town Councilor" candidates to obtain Petitions
Nomination Petitions due	Wed., Aug. 1	Students, others out of town. Hard for students to campaign, and for all to solicit student votes.
Last day for candidates to withdraw from Primary ballot	Mon., Aug. 13	Students, others out of town. Withdrawal must be notarized and delivered to Town Clerk.
Last day to register for Town Council Primary	Sept. 4 Wed., Aug. 15	Students gone. Freshmen (thousands), transfers, other students can't register in Amherst.
Earliest date for Primary ballots	Wed., Aug. 15	Town Clerk must mail out absentee ballots.
	Noon, Fri., Aug. 31	Latest "absentee" vote in person at Town Hall
Labor Day	Mon. Sept. 3	Town offices closed.
Primary for Town Council	Tues., Sept. 4	1 st day of UMass, Amherst College classes. (Students needn't arrive if no class until Sept. 5)
Deadline	Tues., Sept. 4, 12 pm.	Post Office to deliver absentee ballots to Clerk
1 st day, Hampshire College	Wed., Sept. 5	Too late to vote in Primary