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# STRONGER COMMUNITIES BEGIN WITH YOUR BALLOT

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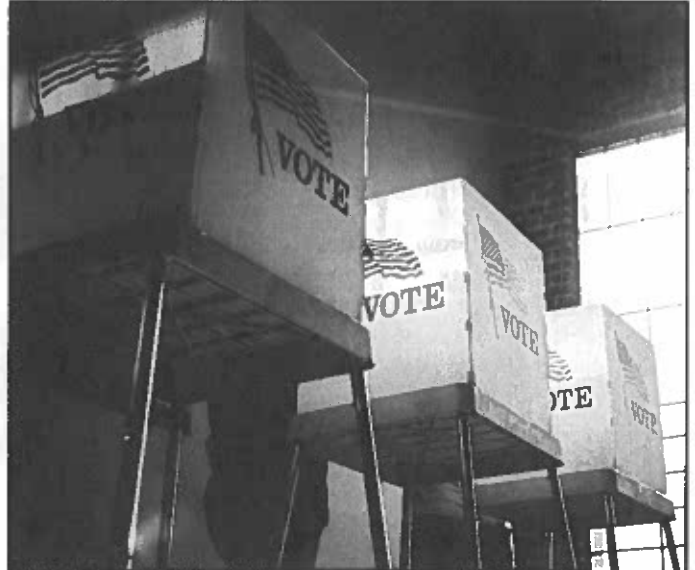
Each new election cycle presents new challenges and opportunities. In a recent Monmouth University Poll, 63 percent of respondents identified the economy, including inflation, gas prices, and paying everyday bills, as the top issues influencing their votes in the 2022 midterms. At a time when paychecks and operating budgets are stretched further and further, your vote counts more than ever.

While some challenges facing our communities appear to be insurmountable, elections give individuals a chance to select officials who may shape better policy choices, and by extension, create stronger communities. Your vote puts in place the personalities, values, and expertise you determine to be the best policy alignment for your family, your business, and your community. Strong, thriving communities require a wide array of amenities and features with two major foundational elements being housing and employment.

For employment, a community must attract employers and industries with a thriving business ecosystem to support, nurture, and grow innovation and profitability. Pro-business policies improve a company's bottom line and increase its job creation potential. In tandem with pro-business policies, a well-maintained and modern infrastructure is a critical part of this ecosystem. If roads, waterways, airports, and public utilities are not updated and kept in good repair businesses may choose to locate or relocate elsewhere.

Then there is the matter of filling open job positions with a well-prepared workforce. A vital workforce needs education, training, safe communities, and affordable housing. Few issues have received more attention in the past two years than the pandemic's effect on the national real estate market. Some experts predicted outcomes similar to the Great Recession, however, real estate prices have continued to rise increasing by 33 percent since 2020 further exacerbating the housing affordability crisis.

For Clark County residents dreaming of owning a home, the outlook is grim. The current median home price, which sits at \$562,869, is unaffordable for 84 percent of residents. Current regulations add an average of \$134,354 to the price of a new home pushing homeownership



further out of reach. The attainability of homeownership is a crucial factor for healthy communities as it creates a path to end generational poverty.

With homeownership out of reach for many, we look to the rental market which has become just as concerning. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recently updated its housing affordability standards which reports that median rent for a home is above \$2000 per month. For families to afford the increase in rent, they must make \$80,000 per year which is approximately \$12,500 more the median U.S. household income.

Decisions at every level of government including city councils, county councils, state legislature, U.S. Congress, and the White House, effect all these issues and more. Those who are elected make the decisions effecting the livability of communities, the viability of businesses, and the security of neighborhoods and families.

We cannot breeze by these decisions and kick the can down the road for the next generation to address. Voting is the easiest way to move the needle on these matters. Don't sit out this election cycle. Information on registration or locating your polling place is available through the Washington Secretary of State.

Building Industry Association has partnered with the Building Industry Group Political Action Committee to identify pro-business and pro-housing affordability candidates seeking office this election cycle.

The list of endorsements is available at [www.biaofclarkcounty.org](http://www.biaofclarkcounty.org).

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