

Independent Kaohsiung councilor survives recall

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Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) Legislator Hsu Chih-chieh, left, hands a tissue to independent Kaohsiung City Councilor Huang Jie, center, as the result of a failed recall vote against her was announced in Kaohsiung yesterday.

Photo: Lee Hui-chou, Taipei Times

Independent Kaohsiung City Councilor Huang Jie (黃捷) yesterday weathered a recall vote to retain her councilor seat in Fongshan District (鳳山區).

Kaohsiung City Election Commission data showed that 65,391 people voted against recalling her, while 55,261 voted in favor.

The voter turnout was 41.54 percent, the data showed.

According to the Civil Servants Election and Recall Act (公務員選舉及罷免法), at least 25 percent of eligible voters, in this case 72,892 people, were required to vote in favor of a recall for it to pass.

Organizers of a campaign to recall Huang proposed the motion in June last year, on the grounds that she had shown no interest in Kaohsiung affairs and was therefore unfit to serve, campaign spokesperson Hsu Shang-hsien (許尚賢) said.

While delivering a speech after the results were revealed, Huang was flanked by Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) lawmakers Hsu Chih-chieh (許智傑) and Chao Tien-lin (趙天麟), independent Legislator Freddy Lim (林錫山), as well as other Kaohsiung city councilors from the DPP.

President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文), in her capacity as DPP chairperson, had called on party members to support Huang.

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Huang was in tears at first, momentarily unable to talk, and then began by thanking Fongshan residents for their support.

She also thanked DPP members and other politicians from the pan-green camp.

“We do not want hatred to spread in Taiwan. Fongshan people acted to stop this hatred, to end this retributive recall drive,” she said. “This is a victory for the forces of democracy ... and a victory for pro-Taiwan forces.”

Separately yesterday, DPP spokeswoman Yen Juo-fang (顏娟芳) said the recall result “indicates that Taiwanese detest retributive recalls spearheaded by the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT).”

“Such recall drives are a waste of resources and pervert our democratic system. They also obstruct the expression of diverse ... viewpoints in a maturing society and impede Taiwan’s progress,” she said.

KMT officials in Kaohsiung said that the recall motion failed because other political parties put too many resources into protecting Huang.

Huang officially entered politics in 2018, when she was elected to the Kaohsiung City Council as a New Power Party (NPP) member.

In August last year, she quit the NPP over what she described as “unfair voting rules in the party’s decisionmaking committee.”

Additional reporting by CNA

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