



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SAN FRANCISCO VOTER

Spring 2010

Letter from President Karen Clopton



The June 8, 2010 Election is almost upon us. Please remember to vote. Enclosed in this issue is the Pros and Cons guide to help navigate the local and state ballot measures.

Please visit the website www.SFvotes.org for more information about the election and to watch the videos that were made to help explain the ballot measures.

The June 19th Annual Meeting will be held at the Mechanics Institute from 9:30 to noon. We expect to have a wonderful speaker from the San Francisco Unified School District on the budget cuts and what the League can do to help. The LWVSF slate of candidates for the League's Board is also contained in this newsletter as is the 2011-12 budget. Please come to the meeting ready to discuss the budget and with questions about either the budget or the slate and ideas of what you would like your League to do in the next year.

On May 19 the League begins a series to celebrate the centennial of the suffrage movement in San Francisco. Dr. Nancy Ryan, California Public Utilities Commissioner, an economist with expertise in energy markets and the public health and ecological impacts of energy production, will speak about the state of climate change. The League will continue the series with the showing of "Unnatural Causes", a compelling documentary about healthcare, followed by a panel of experts. Please stand by for some exciting news about other events in the series and a new and different gala celebration next year.

SAVE THE DATE ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, June 19

9:30 am to 12 noon

Mechanics Institute, 4th Floor

57 Post Street, San Francisco

(near Montgomery BART/MUNI station)

RSVP: lwvsf@lwvsf.org

or 415-989-8683

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Annual Meeting—Saturday, June 19

- 9:30 am Breakfast
10:15 am Keynote Speaker
11:00 am Business Meeting

Business Meeting Agenda

- Call to Order
- Adoption of Rules of the Day (see below)
- Introduction of Timekeeper
- Approval of 2009 Annual Meeting Minutes
- Appointment of Reading Committee for 2010 Annual Meeting Minutes
- Discussion and Adoption of FY 10-11 Budget
- Discussion of Program for 2010-2011
- Proposed Action on Studies
- Committee Reports
- Report of Nominating Committee and Election of Officers
- Directions from the Membership to the Board

PROPOSED RULES OF THE DAY

Debate and comments are to be limited to two minutes per speaker. No person may speak twice until all who wish to speak have had the opportunity to do so. Simplified parliamentary procedures are based on Roberts Rules of Order.

**PROPOSED SLATE FOR
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF
SAN FRANCISCO BOARD FY 2010-2011**

Executive Committee

Karen Valentia Clopton, President

Patricia McGovern, First Vice President

Chandra Friese, Vice President - Voter Services

Julia Fasick, Vice President - Development

Cynthia Foster, Treasurer

Jolinda Sim, Secretary

Officers

Maxine Anderson

Carolyn Lee

Aisha Canfield (bio is attached)

Barbara McEntee (bio is attached)

Fran Finney

Katherine Mindel Jones (bio is attached)

Matt Friese (bio is attached)

Katie Muehlenkamp (bio is attached)

Susan Gordon

Emily Proskine

Robert Harper

Christine Van Aken

Thanks to the Nominating Committee Members!

Marjorie Bailey, Gail Morthole, (co-chairs)

Cynthia Foster, Patricia McGovern, Suzanne Stassevitch



Aisha Canfield

Aisha was raised in the Los Angeles area and moved to the Bay area to attend San Francisco State University, where she is currently completing her Bachelor of Art in Communications. She has worked in defense as a case assistant for the Habeas Corpus Resource Center in San Francisco, assisting in the appeals process for death row cases. She began interning for the League of Women Voters as part of a class requirement and continued to volunteer with the League for two more years. She hopes to attend law school in the Fall and continue serving on the Board.

New LWVSF Board Members up for Election

Matt Friese



It is an honor to have been selected for a position on the League of Women Voters Board. I was born and raised in San Francisco, and attended Santa Clara University with a major in accounting and emphasis on finance. I have worked accounting in a couple of different industries, including real estate, Web 2.0, and what used to be the Hillary Clinton for President campaign. The work done by the LWVSF on Prop 15 has been an interest of mine for some time now. Other interests of mine are the outdoors, nutrition and fitness, and the San Francisco 49ers. Thanks again!

Katherine Mindel Jones



Katherine was born and raised in Sausalito, California and received her B.A. from Duke University, completing a double major in Public Policy and History as well as a minor in Political Science in 2004.

After graduating, Katherine spent a year as a paralegal with the Manhattan Office of the District Attorney before returning to California to attend UC Hastings College of the Law, receiving her JD in 2008. Katherine previously worked as an intern for Congresswoman Nany Pelosi and her legal experiences include clerkships with the California Coastal Commission, the Sierra Club, the Department of Justice and the Santa Clara County Office of the County Counsel. She is currently an assistant long-range planner with the Martin County Community Development Agency, conducting legal and policy research and public outreach as the County updates its Local Coastal Program.

Katherine has been a resident of San Francisco for five years and lives with her husband in Cow Hollow

Barbara McEntee



Barbara's career has focused on the field of communication studies for over 30 years. She has recently retired as an adjunct professor of Speech and Communications at San Francisco State University and has taught Business Communication at New York University's Stern School of Business. Barbara was an executive at a New York public relations agency and has since trained numerous corporations, book authors and corporate spokespeople in media training and public speaking skills. She serves on an advisory committee for the non-profit, "Darkness To Light" whose mission is to educate and prevent childhood sexual abuse. She was co-chair of New York Hospital's Pediatric Development Committee. Barbara holds a BA

from Marymount College and an MA from New York University.

Katie Muehlenkamp



Katie currently works at Barbary Coast Consulting, a public affairs and government relations firm in San Francisco. Prior to that she was an aide to San Francisco Assessor-Recorder Phil Ting. She has also worked for the polling firm Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research, and as the Women's Vote Director for the John Kerry for President campaign in Florida. She has an M.B.A. in Nonprofit Management from Brandeis University and a B.A. from the University of Wisconsin – Madison. She sits on the Board of Good Ol' Girls, a professional network for women in the Bay Area and in her free time enjoys reading, hiking, and spending time with friends.

2010-2011 Draft Budget 501c3

LWVSF Educational Fund

Budget 2010-2011

	Actual/Est. Reserves 7/1/2010	65,000
Grants		
	<i>San Francisco Foundation</i>	0
	<i>Unspecified - application needed</i>	75000
	Total Grants	75,000
Fundraising		
	<i>Year End Appeal</i>	4000
	<i>Women Who Could Be President</i>	75000
	<u><i>Major Donor or Sponsor</i></u>	
	Total Fundraising	79,000
	Total Revenue	154,000
	Transfers to LWVSF 501c4	118,049
	est. transfers until EOY (10-11)	
	Total Expense	118,049
Ending Reserves		100,951

Budget 2010-2011	c4					c3		Unclas- sified
	Develop- ment	G &A	Advocacy	mem- bership	Voter Services	Election Monitoring		
Income								
4010 · Ed Fund Transfers								118,050
4030 · Fundraising								
4031 · Annual Appeal	1,000	1,000						
4034 · Events	20,000							20,000
4030 · Fundraising - Other	0							
Total 4030 · Fundraising	21,000	1,000	0	0	0	0	0	20,000
4050 · Interest and Miscellaneous	0							
5000 · Earned Revenue								
5180 · Program Fees								
5181 · Speaker's Bureau	150					150		
5182 · Election Monitor	425						425	
Total 5180 · Program Fees	575	0	0	0	0	150	425	0
5000 · Earned Revenue - Other	0							
Total 5000 · Earned Revenue	0							
5200 · Membership Dues								
Total 5200 · Membership Dues	20,000							20,000
Total Income	159,624	1,000	0	0	0	150	425	158,049
Expense								
Shared expenses breakdown		0%	6%	1%	6%	85%	2%	0%
6390 · Bank Service Charges	0							
7020 · Contributions to Other Orgs	100			100				
7200 · Salaries and Related Expenses								
7210 · Program Director	40,500	0	2,430	405	2,430	34,425	810	0
7240 · Employee Benefits								
7242 · Health Care								
7240 · Employee Benefits other								
Total 7240 · Employee Benefits	4,700	0	282	47	282	3,995	94	0
7250 · Payroll Taxes, etc.	8,348	0	501	83	501	7,096	167	0
Total 7200 · Salaries and Related Exp.	53,548.00	0	3,213	535	3,213	45,516	1,071	0
7500 · Professional Fees								
7510 · Fundraising Fees	7,500	7,500						
7530 · Legal Fees	50		50					
7550 · Temporary Help	0							
7560 · Payroll Services	0							
7570 · Website Contractor	10,000	4,000				6,000		
7500 · Professional Fees - Other	500					500		
Total 7500 · Professional Fees	18,050	11,500	50	0	0	6,500	0	0
7600 · Media Production								
8110 · Supplies	3,500	0	210	35	210	2,975	70	0
8130 · Communications								
8131 · Telephone								
8132 · Voicemail								
8133 · Website Hosting / Email								
8134 · DSL								
8130 · Communications - Other								
Total 8130 · Communications	4,000	0	240	40	240	3,400	80	0
8140 · Postage and Delivery								
8142 · Additional Postage on Meter	1,500							
8140 · Postage and Delivery - Other	500							
Total 8140 · Postage and Delivery	2,000	0	120	20	120	1,700	40	0

Continued on next page

Budget 2010-2011 (Continued)

	2010-2011 Budget	c4				c3		Unclassified
		Develop-ment	G &A	Advocacy	Member-ship	Voter Ser-vices	Election Monitoring	
8160 · Translation	7,500					7,500		
9000 · Advocacy								
8170 · Printing and Reproduc-tion	5,000					5,000		
8180 · References & Subscrip-tions	150		150					
8190 · Paid Advertising	14,000					14,000		
8200 · Facility & Equipment								
8210 · Rent - Office	18,575	0	1,115	186	1,115	15,789	372	0
8260 · Equipment Rental & Maintenance								
8262 · Facility Rental	7,500							
8263 · Computer Repair	500							
8260 · Equipment Rental & Maintenance - Other	1,200							
Total 8260 · Equipment Rental & Maintenance	9,200	0	552	92	552	7,820	184	0
8200 · Facility & Equip-ment - Other	1,500	0	90	15	90	1,275	30	0
Total 8200 · Facility & Equip-ment	29,275	0	1,757	293	1,757	24,884	586	0
8300 · Travel, Meetings & Con-ferences								
8319 · Travel	0							
8300 · Travel, Meetings & Conferences - Other	500							500
Total 8300 · Travel, Meetings & Conferences	500	0	0	0	0	0	0	500
8520 · Insurance (not worker's comp)								
6410 · Liability Insurance	1,400		1,400					
8520 · Insurance (not worker's comp) - Other	1,100		1,100					
Total 8520 · Insurance (not worker's comp)	2,500		2,500					
8530 · Dues and Membership w/Other	12,000				12,000			
8150 · Mailing Services and Distribution	7,500	0	450	75	450	6,375	150	0
8999 · Other Expense	0							
9000 · Advocacy	0							
Total Expense	159,623.00	11,500.00	8,689.44	1,098.24	17,989.44	117,850.40	1,996.48	500.00



PROS & CONS GUIDE

San Francisco Ballot Measures

Election Day: Tuesday, June 8, 2010

PROPOSITION A

School Facilities Special Tax Charter Amendment

Requires two third majority vote for passage
Placed on the ballot by the San Francisco Board of Education

The Question:

Should San Francisco renew the special tax to pay for seismic upgrades and other safety improvements to School District facilities?

The Background:

After the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake in 1990, voters approved a special tax on property to pay for repairs and improvements to over 150 school and child care center buildings in San Francisco. The goal was to maintain and ensure buildings were safe well into the future. This tax, which expires this year, funds alarm systems, fire sprinklers, paths of exiting and salaries of employees who work on these systems.

State law permits the local government to form a special community facilities district and collect a special tax if the tax is approved by two thirds of the voters in the district.

The Proposal:

Proposition A would authorize a special property tax that extends and modifies the special tax adopted by voters in 1990. The tax would charge a special tax on single-family residential and non-residential parcels of \$32.20. The annual special tax on multi-family residential parcels and mixed use parcels is \$16.10 per dwelling unit. The tax would adjust annually for inflation.

A senior exemption would be available to qualified applicants.

Fiscal Effect:

The Controller states:

Should the proposed measure be approved

by the voters, in my opinion, it would result in an estimated \$6.8 million annually in property tax revenues for the San Francisco Unified School District at current rates and valuations.

The measure renews a special property tax approved previously by the voters in June 1990 which placed a tax of \$32.20 annually on non-residential parcels and single family residential parcels and \$16.10 per dwelling unit on multi-family residential parcels. Under the measure, the tax would be renewed for a new 20 year period. The tax would be set at the current amounts for the first year and would be adjusted each year thereafter by the amount of the consumer price index, provided however that the adjustment could not exceed 2% annually. The amount of revenue that would be generated is projected to grow as the assessed value and the number of taxable parcels and units increases in San Francisco. By the end of the 20 year period, the revenue amount is estimated at between \$11 million and \$16 million annually depending on growth rates in the City.

Funds generated by the proposed tax can be used by the San Francisco Unified School District for capital improvements including seismic work, fire and life safety improvements, and other maintenance and repair purposes, but may not be used for debt service.

ONLINE ELECTION INFO

www.sfvotes.org

ELECTION DAY IS TUESDAY, JUNE 8

- Polls open from 7 am to 8 pm
- Early voting starts May 10
- May 24 is the last day to register
- For more information, visit the SF Department of Elections at www.sfgov.org/election

TO VOTE IN THE JUNE ELECTION, YOU MUST:

- Be a U.S. citizen and a resident of California
- Be at least 18 years old by the date of the election
- Be registered to vote
- Not be in prison or on parole for a felony conviction
- Not have been judged mentally incompetent to vote by a court
- Federal and State Law now requires that every person who registers or re-registers to vote provide either a California Driver's License (or California ID card) or the last 4 digits of your Social Security number on your registration card.

Proposition A (continued on Page 9)

PROPOSITION A (continued)

Arguments in Favor of Proposition A:

- This measure would ensure that there is a safe and stable learning environment for our children's educational success.
- Audits of the previous tax revenues have shown that the money was spent and used wisely and met all requirements.
- This is not a tax increase, but a parcel tax which would give our schools \$6.9 million dollars annually to fund safety repairs and upgrades.
- Qualifying seniors (those over 65) could be exempt from paying this parcel tax. This measure would ensure that students and teachers would not suffer greater cuts because of mandatory safety requirements.

Arguments Against Proposition A:

- This is an attempt to continue to tax property owners for projects that should already be in the budget and appropriated.
- Passing this proposition would lock property owners into an additional 20 year plan of fire and safety improvements without a way to reevaluate actual needs.

PROPOSITION B

Earthquake Safety and Emergency Response Bond

General Obligation Bond

Requires two third majority vote for passage

Placed on the Ballot by the Board of Supervisors: Mayor Newsom and Supervisors Chiu, Avalos, Campos, Dufty, Mirkarimi, Mar and Maxwell

The Question:

Should the City issue \$412.3 million in general obligation bonds for capital projects to improve the City's fire, earthquake and emergency response systems?

The Background:

Currently, in the event of an earthquake or other major disaster, the City primarily depends upon the Police and Fire departments to provide emergency response.

The Fire Department, in turn, depends upon neighborhood fire station and the citywide Auxiliary Water Supply System (AWSS), built in 1906, that provides a dedicated high pressure water system for fire fighting that includes a reservoir, pipes, cisterns, pump stations and high pressure fire hydrants.

The Police Department's Command Center and Southern District Station are both housed in the Hall of Justice at 850 Bryant Street. City sponsored studies have found this building to be deteriorating and probably unusable after a major earthquake.

The City's 10-Year Capital Improvement Plan identifies the repairs and relocation of public safety facilities and infrastructure as a high priority.

The Proposal:

Under Proposition B, the City would be authorized to borrow up to \$412,300,000 by issuing general obligation bonds for capital projects to improve the City's fire, earthquake and emergency response.

The Proposition proposes that a portion of the bond be allocated to:

- the renovation and seismic upgrade of the AWSS core facilities, consisting of a reservoir, two storage tanks and two pump stations;
- the construction, acquisition, improvement and retrofitting for earthquake safety of critical firefighting facilities and infrastructure;
- the construction of a Mission Bay public safety building to house a new police command center, a southern district police station and a neighborhood fire station;
- pay for independent oversight of the bond projects by the Citizen's General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee.

Proposition B (continued on Page 10)



ABOUT THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

The League of Women Voters of San Francisco, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government. The League also influences public policy through action and advocacy. The League does not support or oppose candidates or political parties.

ABOUT THE PROS AND CONS GUIDE

The Pros and Cons Guide is produced by the League of Women Voters of San Francisco Education Fund, a 501(c)(3) non-profit educational organization. No portion of the Guide may be reprinted without the express permission of the League of Women Voters of San Francisco Education Fund.

OUR THANKS

The League's voter education programs were made possible with the generous support of our members and the following sponsors:

San Francisco Foundation League of Women Voters Education Fund Lisa and Douglas Goldman Fund

PROPOSITION B (continued)

This proposition would allow for a property tax increase to pay for the bond. Landlords would be permitted a pass-through of 50% the property tax increase to tenants.

This proposition would require approval by two-thirds of the voters in order to pass.

Fiscal Impact:

The Controller states:

Should the proposed \$412.3 million in bonds be authorized and sold under current assumptions, the approximate costs will be as follows:

- *In fiscal year 2010-2011, following issuance of the first series of bonds, and the year with the lowest tax rate, the estimated annual costs of debt service would be \$3.6 million and result in a property tax rate of \$0.0026 per \$100 (\$2.60 per \$100,000) of assessed valuation.*
- *In fiscal year 2016-2017, following issuance of the last series of bonds, and the year with the highest tax rate, the estimated annual costs of debt service would be \$32.66 million and result in a property tax rate of \$0.018 per \$100 (\$18.00 per \$100,000) of assessed valuation.*
- *The best estimate of the average tax rate for these bonds from fiscal year 2010-2011 through 2039-2040 is \$0.0106 per \$100 (\$10.60 per \$100,000) of assessed valuation.*
- *Based on these estimates, the highest estimated annual property tax cost for the owner of a home with an assessed value of \$400,000 would be approximately \$70.74.*
- *Landlords would be allowed to pass through 50% of the annual property tax cost of the proposed bond to tenants as permitted in the City Administrative Code.*

Based on these estimates, the highest estimated annual cost for a tenant in a unit with an assessed value of approximately \$131,000 would be \$11.79.

These estimates are based on projections only, which are not binding upon the City. Projections and estimates may vary due to the timing of bond sales, the amount of bonds sold at each sale, and actual assessed valuation over the term of repayment of the bonds. Hence, the actual tax rate and the years in which such rates are applicable may vary from those estimated above. The City's current debt management policy is to issue new general obligation bonds only as old ones are retired, keeping the property tax impact from general obligation bonds approximately the same over time.

Arguments in Favor of Proposition B:

- The 100 year-old emergency water supply system would be strengthened, ensuring that firefighters have the high pressure water supply necessary to put out a major fire, even after an earthquake.
- Emergency response and public safety would be maintained after a major disaster by improving and moving police command headquarters to a new public safety building.
- This measure would promote the safety of lives and property in San Francisco.
- Property taxes would not increase as a result of this measure.
- General bonds are always used to fund big projects.

Arguments Against Proposition B:

- This measure would fail to provide a safe place for the jail personnel and inmates or for the court employees, jurors and civilians left behind at the "seismically unsafe 850 Bryant."
- The city and county have already used too many general obligation bonds.

EARLY VOTING AT CITY HALL



Did you know that you can vote before Election Day?

May 10 is the First Day for Early Voting at City Hall

Early voting is available 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday, outside

Room 48 in City Hall. There will also be weekend voting on:

Saturday, May 29 and Sunday May 30, 10am to 4pm

Saturday, June 5 and Sunday, June 6, 10am to 4pm

(enter on Grove St. only)

PROPOSITION C

Film Commission Charter Amendment

Placed on the ballot by the Board of Supervisors

The Question:

Shall the Charter be amended to require the City to have a Film Commission, consisting of five members appointed by the Board of Supervisors and six members appointed by the Mayor, with final authority to issue permits to film in San Francisco?

The Background:

San Francisco's Film Commission is currently comprised of 11 members, all of whom are appointed by the Mayor.

The Proposal:

The measure would change the way in which the 11 members of the Film Commission would be appointed. Should this amendment be adopted, the Mayor would be allowed to appoint six of the 11 members. The selective criteria incorporated by the Mayor would be as follows: two members would have professional experience in the film industry or a related field, two members would represent the neighborhoods or districts most impacted by the issuance of the permit, one member would be nominated by an organization that represents film industry workers, and one member would be appointed from an organization or institution that teaches film studies, or a related field. The Rules Committee of the Board of Supervisors would appoint five members, following a similar standard when selecting members. The Rules Committee would choose: two members that would represent the neighborhoods or districts most impacted by the issuance of the permit, one member would have professional experience in the film industry or related field, one member would be nominated by an organization that represents film industry workers, and one member would represent the general public.

All 11 nominees would be confirmed by the Board of Supervisors. Should the Board not come to a decision within 45 days of the Mayor's submission of nominees to the Clerk of the Board, or should the Rules Committee nominate a candidate for the Board's approval, the nominee would be deemed approved. To disperse the initial terms of the appointees elected by the Mayor, three initial appointees would serve terms of four years; two members would serve terms of three years; and one member would serve a term of two years. The Rules Committee of the Board of Supervisors would also nominate their members in staggered terms. Following this initial election, all commission members would serve terms of four years. Commission members who do not complete their terms would be replaced by a candidate selected by the nominating authority.

The President of the Arts Commission would serve as a non-voting, ex officio member.

The purpose and duties of the Film Commission would be to develop, support, and encourage film activities in the City. Commissioners would work together to promote long-term goals of the film industry as part of the City's cultural and economic foundation.

The Commission's powers would include, but not be limited to: the appointment of an Executive Director, who would serve as the department head and oversee the Commission's staff. The Commission would have the authority to issue permits to film on City property and in City and County right-of-ways. Permits would still abide by City law.

Applicants who would be denied permits could appeal the decision within ten days of the denial to the Commission or the designated committee. Decisions of the Executive Director, Film Commission or the designated committee would be the City's final action on film permits.

Fiscal Effect:

The Controller states:

Should the proposed charter amendment be approved by the voters, in my opinion, there would be a minimal impact on the cost of government.

The Film Commission currently consists of 11 members appointed by the Mayor. The amendment would provide instead that six members of the Commission be appointed by the Mayor and five by the Board of Supervisors, with all members subject to certain qualification requirements and to confirmation by the Board of Supervisors.

The proposed amendment would also specify that the Film Commission oversee all City activities and funding related to public access and governmental channels and that -film permit decisions of the Executive Director would be appealable to the Commission instead of to the City's Permit Appeals Board. The Film Commission currently employs a Director and two permit staff. The Film Commission's budget and staffing would continue to be subject to the normal budgetary and fiscal provisions of the Charter.

Proposition C (continued on page 12)

PROPOSITION C (continued)

Arguments In Favor of Proposition C:

- The City's economy would be improved by bringing valuable jobs to San Francisco.
- Mandating qualifications for commissioners would ensure that they have the appropriate experience and background to get the job done.
- Improving filmmaking and its economic development plan would improve the business climate of San Francisco.
- Including neighborhood voices to the Film Commission's decision making process would make film projects more representative.

Arguments Against Proposition C:

- The Supervisor's influence over the Film Commission would act as a constraint on the public business interests that the commission has already laid out for the City of San Francisco.
- San Francisco's Mayor-appointed eleven-member Film Commission has done a good job and no changes are needed.
- Proposition C would reduce the positive media images of San Francisco's hotel and restaurant districts that have worked to increase the City's tourism, which is San Francisco's largest trade.
- Proposition C is a power-grab by the Board of Supervisors to exert more influence over yet another City commission.
- By law, commission members must reside in the City, it may be difficult to fill all commission seats with qualified individuals.

PROPOSITION D

Retirement Benefit Costs

Charter Amendment

Placed on the ballot by the Board of Supervisors

The Question: Shall the City calculate retirement benefits for new City employees using average monthly compensation over two years instead of over one year; increase the retirement benefit employee contribution for new safety employees and new employees in positions covered by the State retirement system; and require that savings from reduced employer contributions to the City's retirement system be deposited in the Retiree Health Care Trust Fund?

Background:

The San Francisco Employees' Retirement System (SFERS) provides retirement benefits for most City employees. The California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) provides retirement benefits for City

employees in certain job classifications. Retirement benefits for City employees are calculated using a formula that includes the employee's "final compensation," which is the employee's highest average monthly compensation for any one year of earnings.

The Charter requires employees to pay a percentage of their compensation to SFERS or CalPERS to help pay for retirement benefits they will receive.

- Most city employees contribute 7.5% of their salaries towards pension costs.
- Safety employees such as police officers and firefighters pay 7.5%, even though the retirement benefits they receive cost more than the benefits paid to most City employees.
- Some CalPERS members pay 7.5%, even though the required employee contribution is 9.0%.
- Because of contractual agreements or Charter requirements, the City pays the difference.

The Charter requires the City to contribute to SFERS following a set formula. Under this formula, the employer contribution to SFERS depends partly on the investment earnings of the pension fund.

The City has a Retiree Health Care Trust Fund to help pay for costs related to retiree health care. The San Francisco Unified School District and the Community College District are participating employers in this Fund.

Principal Provisions:

The amendment would change the pension compensation for employees hired on and after July 1st, 2010. "Final compensation" would be calculated using a two-year formula. An employee's final compensation would be determined by averaging monthly compensation during:

- any two consecutive fiscal years of earnings, or
- the 24 months immediately before retirement.

The final basis for retirement benefits would be the higher of the two figures.

For safety employees and CalPERS members hired on and after July 1, 2010, the employee contribution to SFERS or CalPERS would increase to 9.0% of compensation.

In years when the City's contribution to SFERS is less than expected because of large investment earnings, the amount saved would be deposited into the Retiree Health Care Trust Fund. The participating employees could choose to have this rule apply to them.

Proposition D would also permit the San Francisco Superior Court to choose to become a participating employer in the Retiree Health Care Trust Fund.

Proposition D (continued on page 13)

PROPOSITION D

(continued)

City Savings Estimate:

Taken together, the change in the SFERS safety and CalPERS employee contribution rates from 7.5% to 9.0%, and the two year final compensation calculation, are expected to reduce the employer long-term cost (called the 'normal' cost) of pension funding by approximately 0.7% over the 25 year period between fiscal year 2011-2012 and fiscal year 2035-2036. Cumulatively, the savings for that same 25 year period is estimated to range between \$300 and \$500 million depending on future wage and benefit rates for employees, and other factors.

Maintaining City Benefit Contributions at the 'Normal' Cost:

The Charter amendment would specify that for any year in which the City's actuarially-required contribution rate to SFERS fell below the 'normal' funding cost, the city would deposit the difference into the retiree health trust fund to pay for future benefit costs. Historically there have been periods in which the City's pension contribution rate was very low or zero due largely to strong investment performance in the SFERS trust. When and if such conditions occur again, this change would effectively require the city to nonetheless continue paying for pension and/or post-employment benefit liabilities at the estimated long-term cost of pension funding which typically ranges around 9% to 10% of payroll over time.

Note that the City currently pays the cost of retirees' health benefits each year as that year's expense is due. As a result, there is a substantial unfunded liability, estimated to be approximately \$4 billion in total, for the future cost of retiree health benefits that current employees have already earned. That liability has been somewhat reduced by the passage of Proposition B in June 2008 which required employees hired beginning in 2009 to pay a portion of post-employment health benefit costs, but the bulk of the cost, estimated at between \$250 and \$300 million annually at current rates, will have to be otherwise addressed by the City. The contributions that would be mandated by this amendment would address a portion of this liability.

Arguments in Favor of Prop D:

- Proposition D would provide real pension reform, better management of retirement costs and provide significant savings to the City over time.

Arguments Against Proposition D:

- A two-tiered retirement system would be unfair to newly-hired workers. They would pay more and receive less from the system for the same amount of work as current employees who are doing the same job.

Fiscal Effect:

The Controller states:

Should the proposed charter amendment be approved by the voters, in my opinion, the City will have reduced costs in the medium and long term for the cost of employee pensions, with those costs largely being shifted from the employer to employees.

Employer and Employee Pension Contribution Rates:

Each year, based on actuarial analysis, the San Francisco Employees' Retirement System (SFERS) board sets the required contribution rates for the City and its employees to fund the cost of current and projected future pension benefits. In FY2009-2010, the City's required contribution was 9.49% of payroll. In FY2010-II, the City's required contribution will increase to 13.56% of payroll, due in part to losses in SFERS' assets related to the economic downturn.

Currently, most employees pay 7.5% of salary to the retirement system as their share of pension costs. This employee contribution rate is fixed in the Charter. For employees in public safety classifications, whose pension cost is higher, the City also pays the difference between 9.0% and the employee contribution rate of 7.5%. Similarly, for city employees who are members of the California Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS), the City pays the difference between 7.5% and CalPERS' mandated employee contribution, which was 9.0% in the most recent year. The amendment would specify that SFERS public safety employees and CalPERS members hired after July 1, 2010 would have to contribute 9.0% of salary as the mandated employee contribution for their pensions.

Final Pension Compensation Calculation:

Currently, employee pension payments are calculated using a formula that, among other factors, is based upon an employee's highest year of compensation. The Charter amendment would change this part of the formula to specify that final compensation will instead be based upon average monthly compensation earned during the highest two years.

Under the Charter and Federal laws, this change would not affect any current employees-only those hired after July 1, 2010. Effectively, the changes will require the creation of a new "tier" of employees whose final compensation calculation is different than most current employees. By approximately 2032, most city employees would be under this arrangement.

PROPOSITION E**Budget Line Item for Police Security for City Officials and Dignitaries**

Ordinance

Placed on the ballot by the Board of Supervisors

PROPOSITION F**Renters Financial Hardship Applications**

Ordinance

Put on the ballot by Supervisors Daly, Campos, Chiu, Avalos, and Mirkarimi.

The Question:

Should the Police Department's budget include a line item for the cost of security provided by the Police Department to City officials and visiting dignitaries?

The Background:

The Police Department provides security to City officials and visiting dignitaries when the Chief of Police determines that they need police protection. The Chief of Police decides the level of protection and uses funds in the Police Department's budget to pay this cost.

The Police Commission approves the Police Department's proposed annual budget and submits it to the Mayor, who prepares the annual budget for the City, including budgets for each department, and submits it to the Board of Supervisors for approval. Currently there is no line item in the budget to cover security costs for protecting City officials and visiting dignitaries.

The Proposal:

Proposition E would require the Police Department's annual budget to include a line item with the cost of security provided by the Police Department to protect City officials and visiting dignitaries.

Fiscal Effect:

The Controller states:

Should the proposed ordinance be approved by the voters, in my opinion, it would not affect the cost of government.

Arguments in Favor of Proposition E:

- The inclusion of a budgetary item for security costs provided by the Police Department to protect City officials and visiting dignitaries simply would provide more transparency and accountability to the City's annual budget.

Arguments Against Proposition E:

- The proposal could limit City law enforcement officials from making independent decisions regarding security needs for City officials and visiting dignitaries.
- The Police Department is not the only law enforcement agency responsible for providing security for City officials and visiting dignitaries, yet the department would be the only agency to have a line item in their budget for such services.

The Background:

The rent for most residential housing built prior to June 1979 is regulated by the city's Residential Rent Ordinance which limits when and how much a landlord can increase a tenant's rent.

Landlords may increase rent once a year by a percentage based on the Consumer Price Index. They can also increase rents by no more than 10% in any 12 month period to pay for certain capital property improvements, some property tax increases, and some utility increases.

A tenant may file a hardship application with the Rent Board for SOME of these increases, but not all of the increases under the current ordinance.

The Proposal

Proposition F would add to the city's Residential Rent Ordinance to provide provisions for tenants to file hardship applications to postpone any allowable rent increase if the following apply:

- The tenant has become unemployed.
- The tenant's wages have been reduced by 20% or more compared to the last 12 months.
- The tenant's sole income consists of government benefits, such as Social Security, SSI, or Disability, and the tenant has not received a cost of living increase in the previous 12 months.

Once the tenant submits a financial hardship application in response to a proposed rent increase, the proposed increases are postponed for 60 days or until the hearing is held (whichever date is later).

At the hearing, an Administrative Law Judge will base the decision on:

- Whether the tenant satisfies one of the above conditions.
- Whether the increased rent would total more than 33% of the tenant's income.
- Consideration of the tenant's assets.

If the tenant is found to have a financial hardship, the landlord may not increase the tenant's rent for a specified time period based on the tenant's circumstances, and a review is set for the end of this time period. At the review, **Proposition F (continued on page 15)**

PROPOSITION F (continued)

the rent may be increased effective as of the date the tenant's circumstances changed for the better. Either the tenant or the landlord may appeal the decisions of the hearing and review to the Rent Board.

Fiscal Effect:

The Controller states the following:

"Should the proposed ordinance be approved by the voters, in my opinion, it would have minimal impact on the cost of government."

Arguments In Favor of Proposition F:

- Renters who have lost their jobs, or seen their jobs shrink to part time are in desperate straights trying to keep a roof over their heads.
- Prop F will help keep people housed while they look for new work and/or better pay.
- Senior Citizens on Social Security saw no increase in their benefits this year- how can they afford a rent increase?
- Rent Control currently has provisions to let tenants postpone some, but not all, rent increases due to financial hardships. But they are inadequate to deal with today's economy. Prop F adds new provisions for hardship specifically designed for renters who have been hardest hit by the recession.
- Much attention has been focused on keeping homeowners in their homes. We need to pay the same attention to renters who can barely pay their rents and who would loose their homes if their rents increase further.

Arguments Against Prop F:

- This assumes only renters are suffering financial hardships. Some landlords pay huge mortgages and are "underwater" financially, owing more than their property is worth. A slew of foreclosures will not benefit anyone.
- New tenants will face higher rental rates and stiffer requirements such as proof of assets and job stability.
- Low income and those without assets will be shut out of low cost apartments, especially if the rent is close to 33% of their current income.
- San Francisco already has a hardship policy in place for some rent increases at the Renter's Arbitration Board with fewer criterions to meet. This proposition could undermine it.
- The government should be providing this relief to renters, not individual property owners.

PROPOSITION G**Transbay Transit Center**
Declaration of Policy

Placed on the ballot by Supervisors Daly, Campos, Mirkarimi, Avalos and Mar

The Question:

Should the Transbay Transit Center, under construction at First and Mission Streets be the northern end of the San Francisco to Los Angeles high-speed rail line, (excluding any continued research and/or expenses in considering other possible sites (Main and Beale) for the rail lines northern terminus?)

The Background:

In November 2008, California voters approved a state ballot measure to issue bonds to build a high-speed rail line between San Francisco and Los Angeles. That measure stated that the Transbay Terminal would be the San Francisco station. The Transbay Joint Powers Authority, a local government agency, is replacing the Transbay Terminal with a new Transbay Transit Center at First and Mission streets. The new Transbay Transit Center would be used by AC Transit, Caltrain, Golden Gate Transit, Muni and SamTrans. The Transbay Joint Powers Authority also plans that the Transbay Transit Center would be the northern end of the high-speed rail line running between San Francisco and Los Angeles.

The Proposal:

Under Proposition E, the City would make it policy that the Transbay Transit Center at First and Mission streets be the northern end of the San Francisco to Los Angeles rail line.

Fiscal Effect:

The Controller states the following:

Should the proposed declaration of policy be approved by the voters, in my opinion, it would not affect the cost of government.

Arguments In Favor of Proposition G:

- The Transbay Transit Center is an approved project, endorsed by the voters and currently under construction.
- The Transbay Transit Center will transform downtown San Francisco by creating a multi-use station in the heart of a new transit-friendly neighborhood.
- Continuing to consider an alternate site (Main and Beale) for High Speed Rail results in unnecessary duplication and delay and will cause undue disruption to the residents of San Francisco.
- High Speed Rail is important to the future of our state. We cannot responsibly build our state with the existing infrastructure.

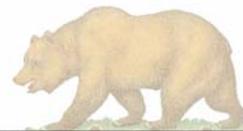
Arguments Against Proposition G:

- This proposition is politically motivated and not concerned with the best interests of residents.
- The proposed rail line is not safer, more affordable, or faster and will ruin the tracks.



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Proposition 13

Limits On Property Tax Assessment.

Seismic Retrofitting of Existing Buildings.

Legislative Constitutional Amendment

The Situation

Local property taxes are based on a property's assessed value. When property is acquired, its assessed value is generally set at the purchase price or market value. Until the property changes hands, increases in assessed value are limited to two percent per year by Prop 13 (1978).

But, if additions or renovations are made, property value is reassessed to include the value added by those changes. There are two exclusions from property reassessment for earthquake safety improvements:

- Earthquake upgrades required by local ordinance on unreinforced masonry structures (made of bricks or cement blocks) are exempt for 15 years or until the property is sold.
- Other earthquake upgrades are exempt until the property is sold.

The Proposal

Proposition 13 would amend the California Constitution to replace two earthquake safety exemptions with a single exclusion for all earthquake upgrades. This would remove the 15-year limit on the exemption for unreinforced masonry buildings.

Fiscal Effect

Minor reduction in local property tax revenues.

A Yes Vote Means

Earthquake safety improvements for any building would not result in higher property taxes until ownership of the building changes.

A No Vote Means

Earthquake safety improvements made to unreinforced masonry buildings would continue to be excluded from increased property taxes for only 15 years.

Supporters Say

- The current law is unfair, treating property owners differently according to the type of structure.

- The change will encourage owners of unreinforced masonry buildings to upgrade them for earthquake safety.

Opponents Say

No opposing arguments were submitted.

Proposition 14

Elections. Increases Right To Participate In Primary Elections.

Legislative Constitutional Amendment

The Situation

California voters elect state and federal officials in two steps:

- **Primary Election** (June)—Each party selects its nominee for each office.
- **General Election** (November)—Voters choose from the party nominees, plus any independent or write-in candidates.

Voters registered with a political party vote in that party's primary election. A political party may open its primary to "independent" voters who did not choose any party on their voter registration form. The candidate with the highest vote total in a party primary becomes that party's nominee and competes in the general election.

The Proposal

Proposition 14 would amend the California Constitution to change primary and general elections for statewide partisan offices like Governor, plus congressional and state legislative offices. Prop 14 provides that every voter may vote in the primary election for any candidate without regard to the political party preference (if any) of either the candidate or the voter. Candidates would choose whether or not to list their party preference on the ballot. Political parties could no longer nominate a candidate, but could still endorse, support or oppose any candidate. The two candidates with the highest number of votes in the primary, regardless of party affiliation, would compete in the general election. Independent and write-in candidates would be allowed in the primary but not in the general election.

Prop 14 would not change the partisan primary elections for presidential candidates and political party committees.



Fiscal Effect

The overall change in the costs to administer elections for state and local governments would probably not be significant, although some counties might need to purchase new equipment.

A Yes Vote Means

All voters would receive the same primary election ballot for most state and federal offices. For each office, only the two top vote-getters in the primary, regardless of political party preference, would advance to the general election.

A No Vote Means

Voters would continue to receive primary election ballots based on their political party. The candidate with the most votes in each party primary would compete in the general election, along with independent and write-in candidates.

Supporters Say

- Prop 14 gives voters a greater choice of candidates in primary elections, and gives independent voters an equal voice in these elections.
- Prop 14 would help elect representatives who are less partisan and more practical.
- Prop 14 would lessen the influence of the major parties, which are now under the control of special interests.

Opponents Say

- Prop 14 reduces voter choice in the general election to only two candidates for each office, possibly both from the same party.
- Prop 14 would help elect more moderate representatives who would be more likely to approve tax increases and unreasonable budgets.
- Prop 14 undermines the role of political parties, which are essential to the process of democracy.

Proposition 15

California Fair Elections Act

Legislative Initiative Amendment

The Situation

In 1988 voters passed Prop 73, an initiative that banned political candidates from using public funds for campaigns. The ban includes all state elected offices and most local offices, although a few charter cities have adopted public financing for some local offices. The Secretary of State serves as the state's chief elections official and has other duties that include monitoring lobbyists' activities. Lobbying is the act of communicating with public officials to influence government actions. More than 4,300 lobbyists are currently registered and pay a fee of \$25 every two years.

The Proposal

Proposition 15 would lift the ban on public funding of political campaigns in California and allow such programs to be created by the legislature. It would also establish a public funding program for Secretary of State campaigns until 2019, which could be extended by the legislation and governor.

Candidates running for Secretary of State in 2014 and 2018 could voluntarily receive state funds for their campaigns if they showed enough public support and agreed to other requirements. Candidates from major parties would have to collect \$5 contributions from 7,500 registered voters, and minor party candidates would need at least 3,750 voters to give them \$5. Publicly-funded candidates could generally not accept other campaign contributions, except limited start-up money and limited party contributions.

Prop 15 sets public funding amounts for participating candidates. Extra matching funds would be allowed when a publicly-funded candidate is outspent by privately-funded opponents. If program funds are insufficient to fund all candidates at the allowed levels, then all candidates would get less public money and be allowed to seek private donations to make up the difference.

Prop 15 would raise the lobbyist registration fee to \$700 every two years and use the increase on the public funding program for Secretary of State candidates. If both Prop 14 and Prop 15 pass, differences in election procedures would have to be reconciled by legislation, judicial action, or another ballot measure.

Fiscal Effect

Spending on the new public funding program would be limited to the available funds. The increased lobbyist fee



and \$5 qualifying contributions would provide the program with about \$6 million for each election year.

A Yes Vote Means

Public funding for political campaigns would be allowed. In 2014 and 2018, Secretary of State candidates could choose to receive public funds for campaigning, if they met certain requirements. Candidates who do not receive public funds would be subject to current campaign finance law.

A No Vote Means

The current ban on public funding for political campaigns would continue. Candidates for all state offices would pay for their campaigns with private funds subject to current law.

Supporters Say

- Prop 15 removes wealth as a major factor affecting whether a candidate is able to run a successful campaign.
- Public campaign funding helps candidates focus on the public interest instead of special interests and fundraising.
- Prop 15 places reasonable fees on lobbyists and won't raise taxes or take funds from other programs.

Opponents Say

- Prop 15 gives public money to politicians and lets them use it on negative ads and junk mail.
- Prop 15 allows the legislature to expand public funding of campaigns to other offices without voter approval.
- Prop 15 overturns a decision California voters made 20 years ago to ban public funding of political campaigns.

Proposition 16

Imposes New Two-thirds Majority Voter Approval Requirement for Local Public Electricity Providers

Initiative Constitutional Amendment

The Situation

Electricity is delivered in California by

- **Investor-owned utilities** (for-profit corporations)—Pacific Gas & Electric, Southern California Edison, or San Diego Gas & Electric and
- **Publicly-owned utilities** (government agencies)—such as the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power and the Sacramento Municipal Utility District.

Although most customers buy electricity from the utility serving their area, some buy from other companies known as "electric service providers."

California law allows local governments to create their own publicly-owned utility or a community choice aggregation program, which buys power in bulk from electric service providers. Decisions about local electric service are generally made by an elected local government board or by a majority of voters in the service area.

The Proposal

Proposition 16 would require a two-thirds majority vote of the people before local governments could use public funds to start up electricity service, expand service into new territory, or contract with electric service providers through a community choice aggregation program. The new two-thirds vote requirement would not apply if public funds were being used for any of the following:

- To produce or buy electricity from certain renewable sources like wind and solar,
- To buy electricity solely for a local government's use, or
- To expand the local electric service area, if the action was already approved by voters in the existing local service area and by voters in the proposed new area.

Fiscal Effect

The net fiscal impact is unknown and would depend on future actions of local governments and voters.

A Yes Vote Means

Before local governments could start up electric service or expand into new areas, they would generally need two-thirds voter approval.

A No Vote Means

Local governments could continue to start up or expand electric service when approved by the governing board



or a majority of voters.

Supporters Say

- Prop 16's two-thirds vote requirement is consistent with the longstanding two-thirds requirement for local bonds and special taxes.
- Voters should have the right to vote before local governments spend taxpayer money or incur debt to get into the electricity business.
- A two-thirds majority requirement for a public takeover of power service is reasonable and prudent.

Opponents Say

- This measure would place an unreasonable burden on local governments trying to provide an alternative to the existing power supply monopoly.
- PG&E sponsored Prop 16 to reduce competition from municipal utilities which offer lower rates to their customers.
- Prop 16 would make it more difficult for communities to increase their use of green energy.

Proposition 17

Allows Auto Insurance Companies to Base Their Prices in Part on a Driver's History of Insurance Coverage

Initiative Statute

The Situation

California regulation of auto insurance was established by Prop 103 in 1988. It requires that rates and premiums be set mainly by three factors: driving safety record, number of miles driven each year, and number of years of driving experience. Prop 103 prohibits insurance companies from using a previous lack of insurance as a factor in rate-setting. Insurance companies can offer a discount to their long-time customers. Companies who give this discount are allowed to increase the premiums of customers who do not qualify for the discount.

The Proposal

Proposition 17 would allow auto insurance companies to offer a "continuous coverage" discount to new customers who switch their coverage from a different company. Drivers would be eligible for this discount if, during the past five years, they had paid all premiums and had no lapse in coverage of more than 90 days.

Drivers with lapses in coverage due to military service abroad could still qualify for the discount.

Fiscal Effect

California insurance companies pay an insurance premium tax instead of the corporate income tax. Prop 17 would probably not have a significant impact on state revenue, since auto insurance premiums are largely based on other factors.

A Yes Vote Means

Auto insurance companies could offer a discount to new customers who had maintained "continuous coverage" with another company, as well as offering this discount to their long-term customers.

A No Vote Means

Insurers could continue to offer a discount to their long-term customers.

Supporters Say

- Prop 17 allows drivers to save money by continuing to receive "continuous coverage" discounts when they change insurance companies.
- Prop 17 will benefit consumers by increasing competition.
- Prop 17 will not change our strong consumer protection laws.

Opponents Say

- Prop 17 will result in new insurance surcharges for millions of drivers.
- Prop 17 means drivers will have to pay a penalty to restart coverage following a lapse.
- Prop 17 changes our laws to favor Mercury Insurance, the initiative's sponsor.



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CALIFORNIA
RECOMMENDS

JUNE 8, 2010 ELECTION

PROP 15

California Fair Elections Act

SUPPORT

Huge amounts of money are raised in California politics, giving special interests unfair influence and access and shutting out the rest of us. Proposition 15 takes an important step toward getting politicians out of the fundraising game. It is a pilot project to make voluntary public financing available to Secretary of State candidates in 2014 and 2018. Only candidates showing broad support and agreeing to strict reporting and spending limits would receive funding. Violators would face fines, possible jail time, and prohibitions from running for office in the future. The pilot program would be funded primarily by fees on lobbyists, lobbying firms and lobbyist employers, with no taxpayer dollars going to candidates. Proposition 15 will allow elected officials to start focusing on the public's interest, instead of returning political favors to their campaign donors.

PROP 16

**Imposes New Two-Thirds Voter Approval Requirement
for Local Public Electricity Providers**

OPPOSE

Proposition 16 would amend the state Constitution to require a city or special district that provides electricity to obtain the approval of two-thirds of the voters before expanding its service territory or providing new service to its customers if public funds are involved. Two-thirds approval by the voters would also be required for a local government to buy power at wholesale prices to sell to residents through a Community Choice Aggregation program. The LWVC opposes this supermajority vote requirement that would allow a minority to prevent decisions on electric supply favored by a majority of the people to be served. PG&E, the largest for-profit utility in the state, is the sole sponsor of Prop 16 and would benefit from this measure's stifling of competition. The impact would be fewer choices and thus higher rates for consumers, and fewer opportunities for local agencies to offer renewable green power.

NO RECOMMENDATION ON THE OTHER MEASURES ON THIS BALLOT

PROP 13 Limits on Property Tax Assessment. Seismic Retrofitting of Existing Buildings

The League generally supports regular, frequent reappraisals for property tax purposes, and this measure excludes certain construction from reappraisal. However, considering the public safety benefit of encouraging seismic retrofits, we remain neutral on this proposal.

PROP 14 Top-Two Candidate Open Primary

PROP 17 Auto Insurance Pricing

Because League positions do not cover the issues in Propositions 14 and 17, the LWVC is taking no stand on these measures.

VOTE WITH THE LEAGUE ON JUNE 8!

The League Recommends...SF Ballot Measure Positions

At its September meeting, the League of Women Voters of San Francisco board of directors voted to adopt the following recommendations on San Francisco ballot measures for the November 2008 election. These recommendations are based on the League's established policy positions. Please note that the League's action/advocacy activities are funded by the League of Women Voters of San Francisco (501c4). Education Fund monies are not used for this purpose. All of the League's educational election resources, including the *Pros and Cons Guide*, are supported by the Education Fund (501c3). If you have questions, please contact the League at (415) 989-VOTE and for a full discussion of our positions, please go to our website at www.Sfvotes.org and click on Action in the top row of choices.

PROPOSITION A – SCHOOL FACILITIES SPECIAL TAX

Special Tax - requires 2/3 vote to pass

Placed on the ballot by the San Francisco Unified School District

The Question:

Should San Francisco renew the special tax to pay for seismic upgrades and other safety improvements to School District facilities?

Background:

After the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake in 1990, voters approved a special tax on property to pay for repairs and improvements to over 150 school and child care center buildings in San Francisco. The goal was to maintain and ensure buildings were safe well into the future. This tax expires this year, which funds alarm systems, fire sprinklers, paths of exiting and salaries of employees who work on these systems. The state law permits the local government to form a special community facilities district and collect a special tax if the tax is approved by two thirds of the voters in the district.

The Proposal:

Proposition A would authorize a special property tax that extends and modifies the special tax adopted by voters in 1990. The Tax would charge a special tax on single family residential and non-residential parcels for \$32.20 for each unit for each dwelling, and the annual special tax on multi family residential parcels is \$16.10 for each dwelling unit which has not been adjusted for inflation.

Relevant Positions:

LWVVF:

Budgetary Systems and Procedures:

2 (d) Reflects realistic planning, so that supplemental appropriations are used only to meet unforeseeable requirements

Education:

2 The San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) should develop and implement a master plan for continuing comprehensive and well-coordinated School Improvement Programs for all kindergarten through 12th grade students. The Board of Education should see that necessary funds are obtained to carry out this plan. The master plan should be evaluated regularly to make sure its objectives are being obtained.

City Planning:

Planning Criteria

2) Social Requirements

c) Physical Requirements;

ii) Safety; fire and earthquake

LWVCA:

State and Local Financing - Flexibility of Revenue

h. each fund or tax earmarked for a specific purpose containing an automatic sunset date and provisions for mandatory government body review and reauthorization;

i. adoption of designated earmarked funds and taxes only in those situations where social benefit significantly outweighs the loss of flexibility;

LWVUS:

No positions that apply to local budgets.

Recommendation: Support

PROPOSITION B -EARTHQUAKE SAFETY & EMERGENCY RESPONSE BOND

Bond - requires 2/3 vote to pass

Placed on the ballot by: Mayor Newsom and Supervisors Chiu, Avalos, Campos, Dufty, Mirkarimi, Mar & Maxwell.

The Question:

Should the City issue \$412.3 Million in General Obligation Bonds for capital projects to improve the City's fire, earthquake and emergency response?

Background:

In the event of an earthquake or other major disaster, the City depends upon the Police and Fire departments to provide emergency response.

The Fire Department, in turn, depends upon neighborhood fire station and the Citywide Auxiliary Water Supply (AWSS), built in 1906, that provides a dedicated high-pressure water system for fire fighting that includes a reservoir, pipes, cisterns, pump stations and high pressure fire hydrants.

The Police Department's Command Center and Southern District Station are both housed in the Hall of Justice at 850 Bryant Street. City sponsored studies have found this building to be deteriorating and probably unusable after a major earthquake.

The Proposal:

Under Proposition B, the City would be authorized to borrow up to \$412,300,000 by issuing general obligation bonds for capital projects to improve the City's fire, earthquake and emergency response.

The Proposition proposes that a portion of the bond be allocated to:

- 1) The renovation and seismic upgrade of the AWSS core facilities consisting of a reservoir, two storage tanks and two pump stations;
- 2) The construction, acquisition, improvement and retrofitting for earthquake safety of critical firefighting facilities and infrastructure;
- 3) The construction of a Mission Bay public safety building to house a new police command center, a southern district police station and a neighborhood fire station;
- 4) Pay for independent oversight of the bond by the Citizen's General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee.

The Proposition allows for a property tax increase to pay for the bond and further, would permit landlords to pass 50% of the property tax increase to tenants.

Relevant Positions:

LWVSF - Financing SF Government

- Support measures that promote effective and equitable methods of paying for City services
- Provide effective control over expenditures

LWVCA – State and Local Finances/Long Term Debt Financing

- To ensure provision for long-term debt financing of certain capital projects by use of bond financing for construction of capital projects
- To use bond funding for the repair and retrofitting of existing public facilities and structures when other means of financing are not available.

Recommendation: Support

PROPOSITION C: FILM COMMISSION

Charter Amendment

Placed on the ballot by Supervisors Alioto-Pier, Daly, Campos, and Mar

The Question:

Should the San Francisco Charter be amended to:

- 1) Revise the Film Commission membership section, establishing member selection by the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors, membership qualifications, duties, and providing for issuing permits.
- 2) Further revise the Film Commission section to establish qualifications of the Executive Director hired by the Film Commission.

Background:

Currently, the San Francisco Charter provides for a Film Commission whose eleven members and Executive Director are appointed by the Mayor. The Mayor may discharge any member or the Executive Director at the Mayor's sole discretion, without cause. The Commission is currently without an Executive Director, since the Mayor's firing, without explanation, of Stephanie Coyote, effective January 31, 2010.

In addition to the Executive Director, there are two permit coordinator staff positions.

The Commission meets at least monthly except August. Agendas and minutes are published at the Commission website, www.filmsf.org.

Charter Amendment:

- Change the Commission member appointment so that the Board of Supervisors’ Rules Committee appoints five of the eleven members and the Mayor appoints six members.
- Require six of the eleven members to have specific film-related professional qualifications. Five members will represent neighborhoods affected by filming (four) and the general public (one).
- Require that the Executive Director have film-related professional qualifications.
- Grant the power to hire the Commission Executive Director to the Commission. The Executive Director could be removed by the Commission, for cause as allowed under the City Charter.
- Give sole power to issue filming permits to the Commission. The Executive Director in Office of the Film Commission will decide on permits; appeals are heard and decided by the Film Commission.

Effect on budget:

Proposition C will have “minimal impact on the cost of government,” according to Controller Ben Rosenfield. The Commission’s budget and staffing continue to be subject to normal City budgetary and fiscal provisions in the Charter.

Relevant Positions:

LWVSF:

San Francisco Charter:

- 1 (b) The Charter should provide for clear designation of powers.
- 1 (d) The Charter should provide for citizen participation.

Executive Branch:

- 2) The Mayor should appoint heads of those departments whose policies are set by the commissions.
- 3) The Mayor should continue to appoint heads of those departments, which are currently responsible to the Mayor.

Boards & Commissions:

- 1) Duties of commissions should include to a) hold public hearings, b) approve the budget of their department or their own budget, c) advise, and d) act as an appeals board. The Film Commission is not required to hold public hearings, but will participate

in the regular budget process, is charged with advising the City on advancing film for economic and cultural reasons, and will be the appeals board for denied permits.

- 2) Selection of commissioners should be based on b) proven ability in a field related to the commission which, under the amendment, is core to a commissioner’s appointment. Appointments should include a) uniform length terms of four years, and b) staggered terms. Both are true with the proposed Film Commission. However, the League position is that Commissions should have no more than seven members and the Mayor should appoint commissioners. The amendment fails compared to these latter two positions.
- 3) Effectiveness will be judged by a) providing a public forum, b) including citizens in decision-making, and c) provides for a range of viewpoints. The amendment will change the Commission to provide for a range of viewpoints, based on expertise. Currently, the Mayor is free to appoint commissioners and the Executive Director without regard to film-related skills or experience.

LWVCA: None

LWVUS: None

Recommendation: Neutral

PROPOSITION D –RETIREMENT BENEFIT COSTS

Charter Amendment

Placed on the ballot by the Board of Supervisors

The Question:

Proposition D is a Charter Amendment that would change the retirement benefits formula, change the employee contribution for certain employees, and require that savings from reduced employer contributions be deposited in the Retiree Health Care Trust Fund.

Background:

The San Francisco Employees' Retirement System (SFERS) provides retirement benefits for most City employees. The California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) provides retirement benefits for City employees in certain job classifications. Retirement benefits for City employees are calculated using a formula that includes the employee's "final compensation," which is the employee's highest average monthly compensation for any one year of earnings.

The Charter requires employees to pay a percentage of their compensation to SFERS or CalPERS to help pay for retirement benefits they will receive.

- Most city employees pay 7.5%.
- Safety employees such as police officers and firefighters pay 7.5%, even though the retirement benefits they receive cost more than the benefits paid to most City employees.
- Some CalPERS members pay 7.5%, even though the required employee contribution is 9.0%.

Because of contractual agreements or Charter requirements, the City pays the difference.

The Charter requires the City to contribute to SFERS following a set formula. Under this formula, the employer contribution to SFERS depends partly on the investment earnings of the pension fund.

The City has a Retiree Health Care Trust Fund to help pay for costs related to retiree health care. The San Francisco Unified School District and the Community College District are participating employers in this Fund.

The Proposal:

For employees hired on and after July 1, 2010, "final compensation" would be calculated using a two-year formula. An employee's final compensation would be determined by averaging monthly compensation during:

- any two consecutive fiscal years of earnings, or
- the 24 months immediately before retirement

The final basis for retirement benefits would be the higher of the two figures.

For safety employees and CalPERS members hired on and after July 1, 2010, the employee contribution to SFERS or CalPERS would increase to 9.0% of compensation.

In years when the City's contribution to SFERS is less than expected because of large investment earnings, the amount saved would be deposited into the Retiree Health Care Trust Fund. The participating employers could choose to have this rule apply to them.

Proposition D would permit the San Francisco Superior Court to choose to become a participating employer in the Retiree Health Care Trust Fund.

Relevant Positions: None

Recommendation: No position

PROPOSITION E -BUDGET LINE ITEM FOR POLICE DEPARTMENT SECURITY FOR CITY OFFICIALS AND DIGNITARIES

Ordinance

Placed on the ballot by the Board of Supervisors

The Question:

Should the annual budget proposed by the Police Commission, submitted by the Mayor, and approved by the Board of Supervisors, to include a line item with the cost of security provided by the Police Department to City officials and visiting dignitaries?

Background:

The Police Department provides security to City officials and visiting dignitaries when the Chief of Police determines that they need police protection. The Chief of Police decides the level of protection and uses funds in the Police Department's budget to pay this cost.

The Police Commission approves the Police Department's proposed annual budget and submits it to the Mayor. The Mayor prepares the annual budget for the City, including budgets for each department, and submits it to the Board of Supervisors for approval. The budget contains line items that specify how much money the City will allocate for particular purposes. The Police Department's budget does not include a separate line item for the cost of providing security to City officials and visiting dignitaries. This proposition would require that the budget include a separate line item for that cost.

According to the Controller, there are no new costs associated with Prop E.

Relevant Positions:

LWVSF:

Financing San Francisco Government:

- Provides effective control over expenditures.

Budgetary Systems and Procedures:

- Support a budgetary process, which is effective, transparent and responsive to the needs of the community.
- Support a budget that meets the following criteria: understandable to elected officials and interested citizens; provides visible relationship between expenditures and objectives so that effectiveness and efficiency can be evaluated.

Recommendation: Support

PROPOSITION F - RENTERS ECONOMIC RELIEF APPLICATIONS

Ordinance

Placed on the ballot by: Supervisors Daly, Campos, Chiu, Avalos, and Mirkarimi

The Question:

Should we add to the city’s Residential Rent Ordinance to provide provisions for tenants to file hardship applications to postpone any allowable rent increase if the following apply:

- The tenant has become unemployed.
- The tenant’s wages have been reduced by 20% or more compared to the last 12 months.

The tenant’s sole income consists of government benefits, such as Social Security, SSI, or Disability, and the tenant has not received a cost of living increase in the previous 12 months.

Once the tenant submits a financial hardship application in response to a proposed rent increase, the proposed increases are postponed for 60 days or until the hearing is held (whichever date is later).

At the hearing, an Administrative Law Judge will base the decision on:

- Whether the tenant satisfies one of the above conditions.
- Whether the increased rent would total more than 33% of the tenant’s income.
- Consideration of the tenant’s assets.

If the tenant is found to have a financial hardship, the landlord may not increase the tenant’s rent for a specified time period based on the tenant’s circumstances, and a review is set for the end of this time period. At the review, the rent may be increased effective as of the date the tenant’s circumstances changed for the better. Either the tenant or the landlord may appeal the decisions of the hearing and review to the Rent Board.

Background:

Currently the rent for most residential housing built prior to June 1979 is regulated by the city’s Residential Rent Ordinance which limits when and how much a landlord can increase a tenant’s rent.

Landlords may increase rent once a year by a percentage based on the Consumer Price Index. They can also increase rents by no more than 10% in any 12 month period to pay for certain capital property improvements, some property tax increases, and some utility increases.

A tenant may file a hardship application with the Rent Board for SOME of these increases, but not all of the increases under the current ordinance.

Effect on budget:

Statement from Ben Rosenfield, San Francisco Controller:

“Should the proposed ordinance be approved by the voters, in my opinion, it would have minimal impact on the cost of government.”

Relevant Positions:

LWVSF:

- 1) Support measures that provides for the needs of low moderate and middle-income groups.
- 2) Support temporary rent regulation with provisions for review which would include:
 - a. Regulating the amount of rent increases.
 - b. Making exceptions for specified circumstances.

LWVCA:

1. Support equal opportunity in housing.
2. Support action at all levels of government for the provisions of affordable housing for all Californians.

Protect the rights of both tenants and land lords.

LWVUS:

1. Supports Equal Access to housing.
2. Supports Policies to provide a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family.
3. Supports programs and policies to prevent or reduce poverty and to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families.
4. Supports income assistance programs based on need, that provide decent adequate standards for food, clothing, and shelter.
5. Promote the economic health of cities and improve the quality of urban life.

Recommendation: Neutral

PROPOSITION G – TRANSBAY TRANSIT CENTER

Declaration of Policy

LWVSF does not take positions on Declarations of Policy.

CALENDAR

Saturday, May 29, 2010, 10:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Bay Area League Convention

No need to RSVP. Castro Valley Library 3600 Northbridge Avenue Castro Valley, CA 94546

Saturday, June 19, 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

San Francisco League Annual Meeting

Mechanics Institute, 57 Post Street, 4th Floor

RSVP to lwfsf@lwvsf.org.

ELECTION Information

Monday, May 24

Last day to register to vote in the June 8 City and State election.

**Saturday, May 29, and Sunday, May 30 & Saturday, June 5 and Sunday, June 6
8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.**

Weekend early voting at San Francisco's City Hall

All registered San Francisco voters. City Hall, San Francisco 94102

May 10 – June 8, Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Weekday early voting at San Francisco's City Hall

All registered San Francisco voters. City Hall, San Francisco, 94102

Tuesday, June 1, no later than 5:00 p.m.

Last day to request a Vote by Mail ballot

Request must be **received** by the San Francisco Elections Department by 5:00 p.m.

Requests postmarked June 1 not accepted. Department of Elections, City Hall, San Francisco 94102

Tuesday, June 8, 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

State and local elections

Vote or drop off your mail-in ballot at the polls in your county by 8:00 p.m.

Friday, June 11 – Tuesday, June 15

League of Women Voters National Convention

Atlanta, GA

Please call the office or email for information about the National Convention

Please note that we are no longer sending out the Voter by snail mail unless you request it. Please send us your email address so that we can email it to you.