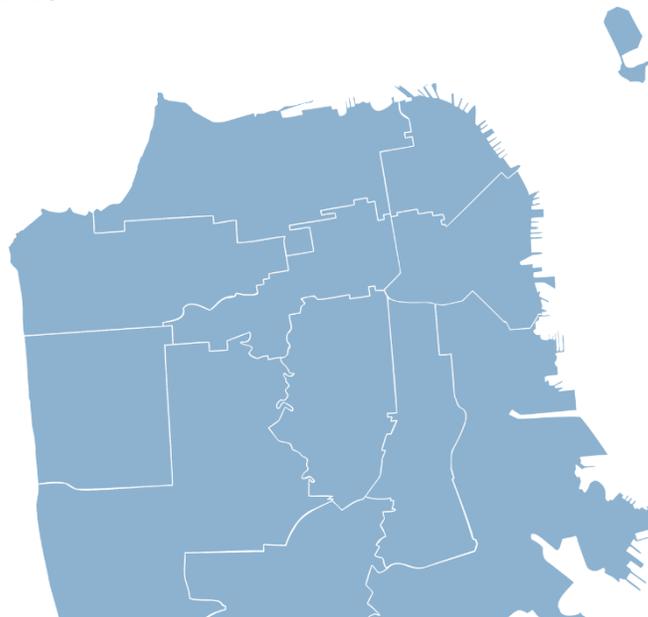


Pros & Cons Guide



Nonpartisan Information on Election Ballot

Election Day is Tuesday, November 5, 2019

Polls are open from 7:00 am to 8:00 pm on Election Day

Early voting starts October 7
Register to vote by October 21



This guide was made by volunteers for the League of Women Voters of San Francisco, a nonpartisan political nonprofit. LWVSF provides education to help people participate in the democratic process and engages in advocacy to influence public policy that benefits the community.

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Request a vote-by-mail ballot by October 29

PROPOSITION A – Affordable Housing Bond

Ordinance placed on the ballot by Mayor London Breed and a unanimous vote of the Board of Supervisors. Requires the approval of two-thirds of voters to pass.

THE QUESTION:

Shall the city issue up to \$600 million in general obligation bonds for the purchase, construction and rehabilitation of affordable housing, to be paid for by a property tax assessment of approximately \$0.019 on each \$100 of assessed property value?

BACKGROUND:

The City provides funding to build and rehabilitate housing to meet the needs of disadvantaged City residents, including affordable housing for extremely low- to middle-income households. The City's funding for affordable housing comes from property taxes, hotel taxes, developer fees and other local sources. The City sells voter-approved general obligation bonds to help provide some of this funding. The City has a policy to keep the property tax rate from City general obligation bonds below the 2006 rate by issuing new bonds as older ones are retired and the tax base grows.

THE PROPOSAL:

Proposition A would allow the City to borrow up to \$600 million by issuing general obligation bonds. The City would use this money to build, buy, and rehabilitate affordable housing in the City as follows:

- \$220 million to acquire, build and rehabilitate rental housing for extremely low- and low-income individuals and families. (Extremely low-income and low-income households earn up to thirty percent and eighty percent respectively of the Area Median Income.);
- \$150 million to repair and rebuild public housing developments;
- \$150 million to acquire and construct housing for seniors;
- \$60 million to acquire and rehabilitate affordable rental housing to prevent the loss of such housing and to assist middle income City residents and workers to secure permanent housing; and
- \$20 million to support affordable housing for educators and employees of the San Francisco Unified School District and City College of San Francisco

Proposition A would allow an increase in the property tax to pay for the bonds, if needed. Landlords would be permitted to pass through up to 50% of any resulting property tax increase to tenants, subject to individual hardship waivers.

Projected average annual revenues from the bonds are \$50,000,000. Proposition A would require the Citizens' General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee to review how the funds are spent.

CONTROLLER'S STATEMENT:

https://sfelections.sfgov.org/sites/default/files/Documents/candidates/Nov2019_PropA_Controller.pdf

A "YES" Vote Means: If you vote "yes," you want the City to issue \$600 million in general obligation bonds to buy, build, and rehabilitate affordable housing in the City.

A "NO" Vote Means: If you vote "no," you do not want the City to issue these bonds.

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ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF PROP A:

- Improves housing for low and extremely low-income families by promoting home ownership for middle class families, and helping seniors and disabled residents stay in the city.
- Reduces homelessness by protecting long-term housing affordability by promoting home ownership for middle class families, and helping seniors and disabled residents stay in the city.
- Helps fund housing for teachers. This would improve teacher retention in public schools, which has been shown to save districts money and improve student performance.
- Creates construction jobs.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST PROP A:

- Could increase the cost of living in San Francisco by up to an additional \$101.57 annually on property with an assessed value of \$600,000.
- Higher property taxes increase housing costs for other city residents, which only adds to the housing affordability problem.
- This proposition only includes a small amount of funding for middle class housing, which is San Francisco's biggest housing need.
- This proposition does not address bureaucracy that is delaying projects.

pre-register at sixteen.
vote at eighteen.

www.registertovote.ca.gov



SECRETARY OF STATE ALEX PADILLA

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PROPOSITION B – Department of Disability and Aging Services

Charter amendment placed on the ballot by the Board of Supervisors; requires a simple majority of voters to pass.

THE QUESTION:

Shall the City amend the Charter to change the name of the Department of Aging and Adult Services to the Department of Disability and Aging Services; to change the name of the Aging and Adult Services Commission to the Disability and Aging Services Commission; and to add new qualifications for three of the seven seats on this Commission?

BACKGROUND:

One in ten San Francisco residents experience disability. The Department of Aging and Adult Services ("DAAS") is the primary City agency tasked with providing social safety net services to adults with disabilities in San Francisco. However, the Department's current name does not effectively communicate this role to the community, which inhibits adults with disabilities from accessing services to which they are entitled.

A key finding of the 2018 Dignity Fund Community Needs Assessment was that consumers and service providers encounter several barriers and challenges to accessing services. Adults with disabilities identified an increased navigation challenge because DAAS' name does not specifically call out adults with disabilities as a population served. This finding was developed through both qualitative research (including forums, focus groups, and a community survey) and quantitative analysis.

Currently, the Charter establishes the Aging and Adult Services Commission ("Commission"), consisting of seven members. The Commission is charged with oversight of the Department of Aging and Adult Services. The Charter does not prescribe qualifications for any of the seven seats on the Commission.

THE PROPOSAL:

Proposition B is a Charter amendment that would change the name of the Department of Aging and Adult Services to the Department of Disability and Aging Services. The name of the Aging and Adult Services Commission would be changed to the Disability and Aging Services Commission.

It would also prescribe qualifications for three of the Commission seats:

- One of the Commissioners would be required to be a person who is 60 years old or older.
- One of the Commissioners would be required to be a person with a disability, as defined under the Americans With Disabilities Act, who is 18 years old or older.
- One of the Commissioners would be required to be a person who served in the United States military.

The proposed Charter amendment would also change the name of the Aging and Adult Services Community Living Fund to the Disability and Aging Services Community Living Fund.

CONTROLLER'S STATEMENT:

According to the Controller, this measure would have a minimal impact on the cost of government.

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https://sfelections.sfgov.org/sites/default/files/Documents/candidates/Nov2019_PropB_Controller.pdf

A “YES” Vote Means: If you vote “yes,” you want to amend the Charter to change the names to the Department of Disability and Aging Services and the Disability and Aging Services Commission; and you want to add new qualifications for three of the seven seats on the Commission.

A “NO” Vote Means: If you vote “no,” you do not want to make these changes.

ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF PROP B:

- Adding the word “disability” to the names of the Department and Commission would more effectively communicate the kinds of services they provide to the community, so that people with disabilities, veterans, and older adults see themselves represented in the name and in the commission, including the 10% of SF adults with disabilities who are entitled to these services.
- Changing the names could improve and increase access to critical health and human service programs that SF residents may not have previously known were in existence.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST PROP B:

- Changing the name could make it challenging for those already familiar with the department to find it without sufficient public service announcements.
- This is an unnecessary charter amendment that would involve additional bureaucratic oversight to make sure Commission seats were allocated correctly and sufficient public education about the name change done.



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PROPOSITION C – Vapor Products

Ordinance put on the ballot by a citizen initiative. Requires a simple majority to pass.

THE QUESTION:

Shall the City overturn the law that prohibits the sale of electronic cigarettes that have not been approved by the FDA, and adopt new regulations on the sale, advertising and distribution of electronic cigarettes in San Francisco, and require further regulations to be authorized by a ballot vote?

BACKGROUND:

Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of early death in the United States, particularly among those who begin using tobacco products in adolescence. Tobacco products include vapor products such as flavored and unflavored electronic cigarettes, (e-cigarettes), which vaporize liquid nicotine and deliver it to the user. The California Department of Public Health reported that 20.8% of high schoolers in San Francisco and San Mateo use e-cigarettes, the highest percentage of any region in California. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control reported an 80% increase in e-cigarette use among high schoolers in 2018, and 20% of high schoolers are addicted to nicotine.

In 2018, 68% of voters approved a ban on flavored tobacco products, which went into effect in January 2019. In June of 2019, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and Mayor London Breed unanimously passed a law--to take effect in January 2020--that will ban the sale, in stores and online, of any electronic cigarettes that have not been reviewed by the FDA. As of July 2019, no applications for pre-market review of any electronic cigarette products had been submitted to the FDA.

City and State laws currently regulate the sale of electronic cigarettes:

- the City and State prohibit the sale of tobacco products to people under 21 and the State prohibits the sale of tobacco products on the internet to people under 21
- the sale of electronic cigarettes is prohibited everywhere the sale of other tobacco products is prohibited
- the City prohibits the sale of flavored tobacco products, including flavored electronic cigarettes
- the City prohibits the sale, manufacture and distribution of electronic cigarettes and other tobacco products on City property
- advertising certain tobacco products on billboards and public signs is prohibited
- tobacco retailers must obtain City permits, and distributors must be licensed by the state
- tobacco retailers must check the ID of anyone who looks under 21, and store electronic cigarettes out of reach by customers
- sellers of electronic cigarettes on the internet must verify that customers are 21 or older.

THE PROPOSAL:

- Proposition C would repeal the City law passed by the Board of Supervisors which bans the sale of electronic cigarettes not reviewed and cleared by the FDA.
- It would partially repeal City law that prohibits the sale, manufacture and online sale of tobacco products on City property by allowing the sale of electronic cigarettes there.
- The measure may repeal other City laws, including those prohibiting the sale of flavored electronic cigarettes.
- The measure would require further regulations or changes to regulations to be authorized by a ballot vote.

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The measure would apply new regulations on the sale and distribution of electronic cigarettes in San Francisco:

- Require retailers to scan customers' government-issued photo identification, and online retailers to use third-party verification of IDs to confirm that customers are at least 21 years old.
- Require each in-store transaction not to exceed 2 devices and/or 5 packages of liquid nicotine and each online sale not to exceed 2 devices and/or 60 milliliters of liquid nicotine per person per month.
- Require retailers to provide at least one hour of training to employees twice a year regarding the law and health code.
- Require online retailers to obtain a permit from the City and County of San Francisco.
- Require the San Francisco Department of Public Health to enforce permit requirements and develop an education and outreach program for parents, young adults, and children on the effects of electronic cigarettes.
- Prohibit manufacturers and retailers from targeting minors with their marketing, packaging, or labeling.
- Prohibit advertising on media primarily used by people under 21 years old.

CONTROLLER'S STATEMENT:

https://sfelections.sfgov.org/sites/default/files/Documents/candidates/Nov2019_PropC_Controller.pdf

A "YES" Vote Means: You want to overturn the law passed by the Board of Supervisors which bans the sale of electronic cigarettes that have not been reviewed and authorized by the FDA, you want to adopt new regulations on the sale, manufacture, distribution and advertising of electronic cigarettes in San Francisco, and you want to require further regulations to be put to a ballot vote.

A "NO" Vote Means: You want to keep the ban on the sale of electronic cigarettes that have not yet been authorized by the FDA, you want to keep existing laws regulating electronic cigarettes in place, and you want to continue to allow the Board of Supervisors to enact further regulations.

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ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF PROP C:

- The measure would apply additional regulations to the sale and distribution of electronic cigarettes in brick-and-mortar stores, thus limiting youth access while preserving adult choice, and it would close a loophole in online sales, preventing access to electronic cigarettes for anyone under 21 years of age.
- Passing this measure allows adults who are addicted to cigarettes to access electronic cigarettes, which may aid in the transition away from traditional combustible cigarettes.
- Proposes public education programs and age/identification requirements that reflect a more common-sense and comprehensive approach to youth vaping and supplement, not repeal, existing regulations.
- New regulations on online retailers would limit bulk sales of vaping products which end up on the black market and resold to teenagers.
- The measure applies new regulations without substantially financially impacting San Francisco businesses that sell tobacco products, according to the San Francisco Office of Small Business.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST PROP C:

- The proposition may effectively repeal the ban on the sale of flavored tobacco products that was passed by 68% of voters in 2018 and would not curb the epidemic of youth vaping: according to a Dartmouth study, for every adult who potentially quits cigarettes because they converted to e-cigarettes, 80 new youth and young adults would start using e-cigarettes.
- Passing this measure, and therefore overturning current legislation by the Board of Supervisors and passed by voters prohibiting the sale of electronic cigarettes, would allow products that have not been approved by the FDA back on store shelves.
- If passed, the proposition would block the Board of Supervisors from enacting new legislation that would further protect youth from addiction to electronic cigarettes because any new regulations or changes to the law would have to be authorized by a ballot vote.
- The proposition would benefit the vaping and tobacco companies who wrote and funded this measure, and adversely affect the teenagers who use the products.
- Current San Francisco law will allow local businesses to sell electronic cigarettes once the products get FDA authorization.

PROPOSITION D – Traffic Congestion Mitigation Tax

Ordinance placed on the ballot by the Board of Supervisors; it must be approved by at least two thirds of voters.

THE QUESTION:

Shall the city impose a business tax of 1.5% on shared-ride fares and 3.25% on private-ride fares within the City taken with commercial ride-share companies to fund improvements in Muni service, and pedestrian and bicycle safety?

BACKGROUND:

In 2018, the state legislature passed and the governor signed into law Assembly Bill 1184, which allows San Francisco to impose a business tax on fares originating in San Francisco with commercial ride-share companies such as Uber and Lyft.

Many major cities, including New York, Chicago, and Washington, D.C., have already imposed similar taxes in an effort to mitigate increased traffic congestion. By some estimates, well over half of the increase in traffic congestion in the last ten years is the result of the use of ride-share companies.

THE PROPOSAL:

This ordinance, effective January 1, 2020, would impose a business tax on rides within the city taken with commercial ride-share companies, which are typically requested through an online platform that connects riders with drivers. This would include rides with companies like Uber and Lyft.

Rides would be taxed at the following rates:

- 1.5% of the total fare for shared rides (rides with multiple individual customers in the car), through Nov. 5, 2045
- 3.25% on private-ride fares, through Nov. 5, 2045
- 1.5% for all rides in electric (zero-emission) vehicles, through Dec. 31, 2024

The city would be able to impose the same taxes on rides in autonomous (driverless) vehicles should they become available. The tax would not apply to taxis and paratransit companies.

These taxes would be paid by the ride-share companies but could be passed on to consumers.

Revenue from these taxes would be deposited in the Traffic Congestion Mitigation Fund and would be shared equally between the San Francisco Municipal Transit Authority, to improve Muni services, and the San Francisco County Transportation Authority, which oversees the Vision Zero plan to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety. Vision Zero aims to eliminate traffic-related deaths in the city by 2024.

CONTROLLER'S STATEMENT:

If passed, this ordinance would generate \$30–35 million in additional tax revenue annually.

https://sfelections.sfgov.org/sites/default/files/Documents/candidates/Nov2019_PropD_Controller.pdf

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A “YES” Vote Means: You want to authorize business taxes on city rides in commercial ride-share vehicles to fund improvements in Muni service and pedestrian and bicycle safety.

A “NO” Vote Means: You oppose authorizing these taxes.

ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF PROP D:

- Prop D will ease traffic in San Francisco and make our streets safer for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- This small tax on ride-share fares will help Muni hire, retain and train more drivers, buy more vehicles, and improve its services and facilities.
- This measure will mitigate traffic by encouraging people to take public transportation, walk, bike, or take shared rides.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST PROP D:

- This tax does not go far enough and will not have any substantial impact on traffic congestion in San Francisco.
- This tax could result in increasing traffic congestion by incentivizing people to drive their own vehicles instead of sharing rides.
- This tax will only make living in San Francisco even more expensive.

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PROPOSITION E – Affordable Housing and Educator Housing

Ordinance placed on the ballot by a majority vote of the Board of Supervisors. Requires the approval of a majority of voters to pass.

THE QUESTION:

Shall the city amend the Planning Code to allow 100% Affordable Housing Projects and Educator Housing Projects in public zoning districts and to expedite City approval of these projects?

BACKGROUND:

The City Planning Code applies different zoning rules to different neighborhoods in San Francisco. In residential zoning districts, the Planning Code allows residential buildings but regulates the size, height, density and other factors like the amount of yard space, open space, and nonresidential space. Some types of buildings are subject to a conditional use authorization, which requires the Planning Commission to hold a public hearing and consider certain factors before approving the project.

In public zoning districts, the Planning Code allows government buildings, public structures, City plazas, parks and other similar uses but prohibits any residential buildings.

The Planning Department reviews proposed projects for zoning requirements. The Department must prioritize and expedite its review of proposed affordable housing projects.

The Planning Code does not include specific zoning rules for residential projects dedicated to employees of the San Francisco Unified School District or the San Francisco Community College District.

THE PROPOSAL:

Proposition E is an ordinance that would amend the Planning Code to allow 100% Affordable Housing Projects and Educator Housing Projects in public zoning districts and to expedite City approval of these projects.

Under Proposition E, 100% Affordable Housing and Educator Housing projects:

- would be allowed in residential zoning districts and in public zoning districts, except on property used for parks;
- would be located on lots that are at least 10,000 square feet;
- could not demolish or replace existing residential units;
- would be subject to less restrictive rules regarding size, ground-floor height, density and other factors than other residential buildings;
- would allow a limited amount of mixed or commercial use that supports affordable housing;
- would not be subject to any conditional use restriction unless adopted by the voters;
- would require a review of proposed 100% Affordable Housing and Educator Housing projects within 90 to 180 days, depending on the size of the project;
- would authorize the expedited review of the first 500 units of proposed Educator Housing.

The Planning Department would be allowed to administratively approve 100% Affordable and Educator Housing projects, without review by the Planning Commission.

The Board of Supervisors would be allowed to amend Proposition E by a two-thirds vote without voter approval.

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CONTROLLER'S STATEMENT

https://sfelections.sfgov.org/sites/default/files/Documents/candidates/Nov2019_PropE_Controller.pdf

A “YES” Vote Means: You want to amend the Planning Code to allow 100% Affordable Housing Projects and Educator Housing Projects in public zoning districts and to expedite approval of these projects.

A “NO” Vote Means: If you vote “no,” you do not want to make these changes.

ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF PROP E:

- Will speed up approval and construction of much-needed affordable housing, especially in areas of the City that have vacant lots, need more housing units and could benefit from more mixed-use development.
- Will help the City attract and retain high quality teachers for SFUSD and CCSF and make it more affordable for families to live in San Francisco.
- Shorter project review times could result in cost savings on projects.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST PROP E:

- Housing is already permitted on public land with planning variance, so further planning code modifications aren't needed.
- Could provide a back door to private for-profit development on public land.
- Removes neighborhood input on community projects and bypasses the approval process of the Planning Commission, reducing oversight of development projects.

PROPOSITION F – Campaign Contributions and Campaign Advertisements

Ordinance placed on the ballot by a majority of the Board of Supervisors; requires the approval of a simple majority of voters to pass.

THE QUESTION:

Shall the City establish new restrictions on campaign contributions to local elected officials and candidates, and apply new disclaimer requirements to campaign advertisements?

BACKGROUND:

According to the San Francisco Ethics Commission, more than \$6.8 million was spent on 22 candidates for five open district seats on the Board of Supervisors. That is an average of \$311,000 per candidate. In Board of Supervisors races, third-party spending rose from about \$82,000 per candidate in 2010 to about \$214,000 per candidate in 2018.

This proposition is positioned as a way to restrict the sources of and provide additional transparency around the origin of private funding of local political campaigns.

Currently, the disclaimer on an advertisement paid for by an independent Political Action Committees (PAC) must name the committee's top three contributors of \$10,000 or more.

Local law restricts direct campaign contributions to local elected officials and candidates from corporations (both for-profit and nonprofit) and city contractors, or those seeking to contract with the City, during specific periods.

There is currently no local law restricting donations from people who have a financial interest in a land-use decision with the City.

If the measure passes, the regulations will go into effect 10 days after the election results are certified.

THE PROPOSAL:

The proposition applies to two areas; campaign advertising disclosures and campaign contributions.

This proposition requires campaigns to prominently disclose the name and dollar amount contributed by the top three donors contributing \$5,000 or more toward campaign ads, lowering the existing limit from \$10,000 to \$5,000. If any of the top three donors is a PAC (an organization that raises money privately to influence elections or legislation), the disclaimer must disclose their top two donors of \$5,000 or more. Website referrals, print materials (flyers, posters, mass mailings, etc.), candidate audio, and visual advertisements are all impacted.

Proposition F would also increase the size of written disclaimers and require disclaimers to appear at the beginning of audio and video advertisements.

Campaign contributions from limited liability corporations (LLC) and limited liability partnerships (LLP) would be subject to the same limitations as corporations.

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The proposition further restricts contributions from people who have a financial interest in an existing land use decision with the City. This restriction would start when a request or application regarding a land-use matter is pending before City boards and commissions and would end 12 months after the City's final decision.

Financial interest is defined as:

- A person with an ownership interest of \$5 million or more in a project;
- A director or principal officer of an entity with an ownership interest of \$5 million or more in a project; or
- A developer of a project with an estimated construction cost of \$5 million or more.

If the land-use matter concerns only the private residence of a contributor, the restriction does not apply.

CONTROLLER'S STATEMENT:

https://sfelections.sfgov.org/sites/default/files/Documents/candidates/Nov2019_PropF_Controller.pdf

A "YES" Vote Means: If you vote "yes," you want to establish new restrictions on campaign contributions to local elected officials and candidates, and apply new disclaimer requirements to campaign advertisements.

A "NO" Vote Means: If you vote "no," you do not want to make these changes.

ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF PROP F:

- Provides additional transparency to voters regarding paid advertising for candidates in an environment where third-party spending is increasing.
- Subjects LLCs and LLPs to the same restrictions as any other corporate entity in terms of contributions.
- Removes perceived conflict of interest where a person has a financial interest in an open land use matter with the City.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST PROP F:

- This measure bars some individuals from participating in the political process in the case of an open land-use decision.
- Increased transparency could open the contributors to some PACs up to public harassment.
- Does not explicitly include digital or online advertising which have become more essential to campaigns.

Be a voter!

You are eligible to register to vote in San Francisco if you are:

- ✓ A United States citizen
- ✓ A resident of San Francisco
- ✓ At least 18 years old on Election Day
- ✓ Not in prison or on parole for a felony conviction
- ✓ Not found mentally incompetent to vote by a court

Are you age 16 or 17? You can pre-register to vote at registertovote.ca.gov.

Not a citizen? Learn about voting for School Board at sfelections.org/noncitizenvoting.

Want more voting information? Visit sfelections.sfgov.org or call 415-554-4375.

Get even more election resources

This Pros & Cons Guide is just one of many nonpartisan resources the League of Women Voters of San Francisco provides that can help you become a more informed and active participant in elections. We also offer:

- Candidate forums
- Statements from candidates
- ...and more!

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