



Help achieve an open and accountable government

January 21, 2026

Commission Streamlining Task Force
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
Room 263
San Francisco, CA 94102

Re: Agenda Item #4: Proposed Amendments to Ethics Commission Ballot Authority — OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED

Dear Members of the Commission Streamlining Task Force,

I write on behalf of the California Clean Money Campaign, a non-partisan good-government organization working since 2002 to reduce the influence of big money in California politics, with more than 15,000 supporters in San Francisco and 150,000 statewide.

We join California Common Cause and the League of Women Voters of San Francisco in strong opposition to the proposed changes to the Ethics Commission's ballot-placement authority in Agenda Item #4, which would effectively give the Board of Supervisors veto power over any measure the Ethics Commission proposes.

San Francisco voters granted the Ethics Commission independent ballot authority as a structural check on elected officials who have an inherent conflict of interest in regulating their own conduct. This power has been used sparingly but to significant effect — San Francisco's nation-leading matching-funds system, for example, would never have reached the ballot without it. Transferring final amendment authority to the Board would undermine that safeguard, invite political pressure, and weaken the Commission's independence.

We agree that it would be valuable for the Board and the public to have additional opportunities to engage with and propose amendments to Commission-initiated measures before they go to the ballot. That is why **we strongly support the Ethics Commission's counterproposal**: allow Board hearings and amendment suggestions, but retain final amendment and ballot-placement authority with the Ethics Commission. This approach encourages dialogue and compromise while preserving the independence voters intended.

Please protect the integrity of San Francisco's voter-approved ethics framework by rejecting the current proposal and instead adopting a version consistent with the Ethics Commission's compromise proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Trent Lange". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Trent" being more prominent than the last name "Lange".

Trent Lange, PhD.
President and Executive Director
California Clean Money Campaign