

Changes to Ballot Measure Process*

Digest by the Ballot Simplification Committee

Status: Draft for Consideration
On: Wednesday, July 22, 2026
Members: Packard, Wong, Bella, Paxton

Deadline to Request Reconsideration: TBD

The Way It Is Now: Under the City's Charter, an ordinance or declaration of policy (measure) may be placed on the ballot in several ways, including:

- By a six-member majority vote of the Board of Supervisors (Board);
- By four or more Board members without a Board vote;
- By the Mayor without a Board vote; or
- By a petition (signature initiative) signed by at least 2% of the registered voters in San Francisco, which is currently about 10,600 signatures.

Signature initiatives usually appear on the ballot at the next regularly scheduled election.

Signature initiatives may call for an earlier "special" election on an ordinance if the petition is signed by at least 10% of the votes cast for all candidates for Mayor in the last mayoral election. This is currently about 39,000 signatures.

Once a signature initiative is submitted to the Department of Elections, it cannot be withdrawn.

The Proposal: Proposition ____ would amend the Charter to remove the ability of the Mayor or four or more Board members to place a measure on the ballot without a Board vote. The Board could still place measures on the ballot by a six-member majority vote.

Proposition ____ would increase the number of signatures required to place a signature initiative on the ballot to 8% of the registered voters in San Francisco. This is currently about 42,500 signatures.

Proposition ____ would increase the number of signatures required to call a special election on an ordinance to 10% of the registered voters in San Francisco (instead of 10% of votes cast for all candidates for Mayor in the last mayoral election). This is currently about 53,100 signatures.

Proposition ____ would allow proponents of signature initiatives to withdraw their initiatives up to 102 days before the election.

A "YES" Vote Means: If you vote "yes," you want to eliminate the ability of four Supervisors or the Mayor to place measures on the ballot, increase the thresholds for signature initiative petitions, and allow withdrawal of signature initiatives before the election.

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

**Working title, for identification only. The Director of Elections determines the title of each local ballot measure; measure titles are not considered during Ballot Simplification Committee meetings.*