



OFFICE OF THE CONTROLLER

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Greg Wagner
Controller

ChiaYu Ma
Deputy Controller

Mr. John Arntz
Department of Elections
City Hall 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place Room 48
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

August 10, 2026

RE: Proposition D – Changes to Ballot Measure Process

Dear Mr. Arntz,

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

The proposed Charter amendment would (1) require the approval of a majority of the Board of Supervisors to place an ordinance on the ballot, (2) eliminate the Mayor's ability to directly place an ordinance on the ballot, (3) increase the voter signature threshold for initiatives from 2% to 8% (currently from about 10,600 to about 42,500 signatures) of the registered voters in San Francisco, (4) allow proponents to withdraw a measure after it qualifies for the ballot, and (5) raise the threshold for special elections from 10% of the votes for mayor in the last general municipal election to 10% of registered voters.

The proposed amendment is likely to reduce costs at levels that cannot be determined at this time. Since the proposed Charter amendment raises the voter signature threshold, fewer initiatives may qualify for the ballot which may reduce the volume of printed pages included in the voter information pamphlet (VIP). On average, each page in the VIP costs \$11,400 to prepare, print, and distribute to all registered voters. The proposed increase in the voter signature threshold may also reduce the number of special elections called which would result in cost savings for the Department of Elections. The estimated minimum cost for a citywide special election is \$5 million with a one-card ballot and less than 50-page VIP.

The proposed Charter amendment may impact the Department of Election's workload. It may result in a reduction in ballot ordinances which would reduce the associated workload for the Department of Elections—freeing staff to work on other government functions. Conversely, the Department of Elections may see an increase in workload to validate more voter signatures for a measure to qualify for the ballot and to remove qualified measures at the proponents' request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Wagner".

Greg Wagner
Controller

Note: This analysis reflects our understanding of the proposal as of the date shown. At times further information is provided to us which may result in revisions being made to this analysis before the final Controller's statement appears in the Voter Information Pamphlet.