

President, Board of Supervisors
District 8



City and County of San Francisco

RAFAEL MANDELMAN

TO: Ballot Simplification Council of San Francisco

FROM: President Rafael Mandelman

DATE: July 29, 2026

SUBJECT: Request for Reconsideration of the “Need to Know” Section for File No. 260536 [Charter Amendment - Department, Board, Commission, and Advisory Body Updates]

Dear Members Packard, Wong, Bella, Paxton, and Pon,

Thank you for your time yesterday, and for the hard work the Council put into drafting the digest for the Charter Amendment updating department, commission, and advisory body functions. I’m writing to request that the Council reconsiders the addition of a list of commissions and advisory bodies affected by this measure in the “Need to Know” section of the Voter Information Pamphlet.

Since the measure makes over 100 changes, choosing to name specific bodies affected is a persuasive choice. Voters have no way of knowing why those particular bodies were chosen for mention and not others, and the list will naturally signal that those bodies are the changes most significant.

The changes made to the bodies are not uniform, and they lack necessary context. Some changes are procedural or administrative updates to support effective functioning, while other changes are in name only to align with naming standards previously enacted. For example, a voter would read a named body in a list, and would not know that it is being eliminated because it oversees a department that does not exist. They may mistakenly assume it is a crucial body to the City and fear its elimination. Similarly, a voter may see a body listed that is only being changed in name, and may assume that it is being eliminated. A voter might easily come away believing the measure does substantially more to a given body than it actually does.

The creation of a list of commission and advisory bodies affected also draws disproportionate attention to changes that do not make up the majority of the measure, but only make up about 38%. Highlighting the minority category while leaving the majority of the measure undescribed

creates a skewed impression. A voter reading the digest could reasonably conclude that this measure is primarily about commissions and advisory bodies, when in fact that category represents well under half of its total scope.

For these reasons, we respectfully ask that the Council does not include a list of specific commissions or advisory bodies in the “Need to Know” section, and instead stay consistent in describing the measure’s scope in general, functional terms.

We appreciate the Council’s willingness to consider this request, and we are available to discuss further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rafael Mandelman', with a stylized, flowing script.

Board President Rafael Mandelman, District 8
San Francisco Board of Supervisors