

Patrick Monette-Shaw

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June 16, 2026

Budget and Appropriations Committee
Board of Supervisors
The Honorable Connie Chan, Chair
The Honorable Matt Dorsey, Member
The Honorable Danny Sauter, Member
The Honorable Shamann Walton, Member
The Honorable Rafael Mandelman, Member
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

“ First, they came for the Jews. But I wasn’t Jewish.
Then they eliminated text about what I was voting on.
Then they took away my right to even vote.
What’s next? ”

Re: **Testimony on File #260604 Eliminating Ballot measure Legal Text From Voter Guide (Agenda Item #7) — Strongly Oppose**

Dear Chair Chan, and Members of the Budget and Appropriations Committee,

Regarding agenda item #7 on the Budget and Appropriations Committee’s June 17 meeting agenda, please forward a Committee Recommendation to the full Board of Supervisors recommending this Ordinance be closed without action, for the reasons below:

Mayor Lurie had his Budget Manager, Sophia Kittler, submit “*trailing legislation*” to his budget submission for the next Fiscal Year set to begin on July 1 calling for eliminating all ballot measure’s legal text from San Francisco’s voter guides (the “*Voter Information Pamphlets*”). As you can see in a secondary analysis of date Director of Elections submitted to the Board of Supervisors for a December 10, 2025 budget hearing, eliminating the legal text from voter guides for mid-term elections would save an average of \$440,432, or just 0.00734 of **one percent** of the City’s \$16 **billion** annual budget.

Yes, 0.0073%, is a mere **seventy-three one-thousandths of one percent** of the City’s annual budget.

Paid Ballot Fees Analysis — Five Recent Elections

	Mid-Term (Fall) Elections				Primary (Spring) Elections		
	11/5/2024	11/8/2022	11/3/2020	Average of 3 Fall Elections	3/5/2024	6/7/2022	Average of 2 Spring Elections
Voter Guide Production Cost Categories							
Typesetting	\$ 247,923	\$ 153,614	\$ 110,000		\$ 108,570	\$ 120,670	
Printing	\$ 1,953,607	\$ 1,345,790	\$ 1,107,123		\$ 1,130,009	\$ 758,730	
Mailing	\$ 268,591	\$ 206,407	\$ 131,150		\$ 222,210	\$ 111,239	
Total Cost of Voter Guide:	\$ 2,470,121	\$ 1,705,811	\$ 1,348,273	\$ 1,841,407	\$ 1,460,789	\$ 990,639	\$ 1,225,714
% of \$16 Billion Dollar City Budget	0.04117%	0.02843%	0.02247%	0.03069%	0.02435%	0.01651%	0.02043%
Total Size of Voter Guide							
Total Voter Guide Pages per Elections Department)	296	256	232	261	152	136	144
Average Cost Per Page	\$ 8,345	\$ 6,663	\$ 5,812	\$ 6,940	\$ 9,610	\$ 7,284	\$ 8,447
Total Ballot Measures	15	13	12	13	7	8	8
Legal Text of Ballot Measures							
Total Pages Legal Text	78	57	50	62	21	20	21
Savings If All Legal Text Pages Eliminated	\$ 650,910	\$ 379,809	\$ 290,576	\$ 440,432	\$ 201,820	\$ 145,682	\$ 173,751
% of \$16 Billion Dollar City Budget	0.01085%	0.00633%	0.00484%	0.00734%	0.00336%	0.00243%	0.00290%
Total Production Cost Paid Arguments Pages Only							
Paid Arguments Costs to Total Voter Guide Costs	24.7%	27.0%	24.6%	25.4%	24.3%	24.3%	24.3%
Paid Ballot Arguments							
Number of Pages of Paid Ballot Arguments	73	69	57	66	37	35	36
Number of Paid Ballot Arguments	207	204	192	201	94	98	96
Filing Fees Collected	\$ 41,400	\$ 40,800	\$ 38,400	\$ 40,200	\$ 18,800	\$ 19,600	\$ 19,200
Word Count Submitted	31,667	27,547	21,507	26,907	16,065	13,615	14,840
Word Count Fees Collected @\$2.00 per word	\$ 63,334	\$ 55,094	\$ 43,014	\$ 53,814	\$ 32,130	\$ 27,230	\$ 29,680
Word Count Fees Collected @\$10.00 per word	\$ 316,670	\$ 275,470	\$ 215,070	\$ 269,070	\$ 160,650	\$ 136,150	\$ 148,400
Increase Revenue Recovered if Fee Increased	\$ 253,336	\$ 220,376	\$ 172,056	\$ 215,256	\$ 128,520	\$ 108,920	\$ 118,720
% of \$16 Billion Dollar City Budget	0.00422%	0.00367%	0.00287%	0.00359%	0.00214%	0.00182%	0.00198%

Source: Department of Elections PowerPoint Presentation “Municipal Elections Code – Ballot Argument Fees” to Budget and Appropriations Committee, December 10, 2025.

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Testimony on File #260604 Eliminating Ballot measure Legal Text From Voter Guide (Agenda Item #7) — Oppose

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Alternatively, eliminating publishing ballot measure legal text from the voter guide for **primary** elections held in the Spring would save an average of just \$173,751, or just 0.00290 of **one percent** of the City's \$16 **billion** annual budget. Also, 0.0029%, is a mere **twenty-nine one-thousandths of one percent** of the City's annual budget.

Both cases involve an incredibly small amount of budget savings, which is negligible. It appears to most observers that Mayor Lurie just wants to silence dissent and Community voices!

If the Ordinance in File #260604 is passed by the Budget and Appropriations Committee on June 17, it will become effective 31 days after passage, and will be implemented in time for this November's mid-term election at which a Mayor Lurie's Charter Amendment about additional "*ballot measure*" reform will be put before voters.

Lurie's scheme is the exact *opposite* of transparency and accountability. Saving \$173,751 to \$440,432 per election cycle sends the message that eliminating these inconsequential costs is more important to the Mayor and his billionaire backers than allowing voters to see exactly which details lurk in the legal text of proposed ballot measures.

And it reeks of the **same** type of hiding information from the public that current President Donald Trump is forcing on voters nationwide. Is that Lurie's ultimate goal?

As another observer has noted, eliminating the legal text from voter guides reduces the chances of having an informed and educated electorate. *Is the purpose to make it easier to deceive the public with misleading ads by those who are able to spend the most* — say Lurie's billionaire backers, and the billionaires and centimillionaires donating tens of millions of dollars to Astroturf Network groups and so-called "*independent expenditure committees*" in San Francisco that place paid

“ Mayor Lurie’s plan to eliminate printing the legal text of all ballot measures in the Voter Guide would save an average of \$440,432 (during elections held in the fall), which represents 0.0073% — a mere seventy-three one-thousandths of one percent — of the City’s annual budget. ”

“ Similarly, eliminating printing the legal text of all ballot measures in the Voter Guide would save an average of \$173,751 (during elections held in the spring), which represents 0.0029% — a mere twenty-nine one-thousandths of one percent — of the City’s annual budget. ”

As noted in companion testimony, on December 10 Budget Chair Connie Chan said “*we should have further discussion likely, besides in addition to a public hearing here. I think that Department of Elections, realizing and recognizing more work needs to be done, or more public conversation needs to be had before we decide on fee increases for [paid voter guide arguments].*” **Similarly, there must be robust public discussion about eliminating inclusion of the ballot measure legal text from voter guides.**

Mayor's Companion Scheme in November

It's clear eliminating the legal text of ballot measures is a companion effort to Mayor Lurie's proposed November Charter Amendment ballot measure titled “*Fix Our Broken Ballot Measure Process.*” His Charter Amendment would require proponents of a measure to gather signatures from 8 percent (about 40,000) of registered voters before a measure can be placed on the ballot, rather than the current requirement of just 2 percent, making grassroots politics more difficult.

Lurie's Charter Amendment is gathering signatures and is funded by billionaires Michael Moritz and Chris Larson.

It's clear that Lurie wants to make it more difficult to gather enough signatures to place measures on the municipal ballot for City elections. Increasing the threshold of required signatures to qualify suggests that only billionaire backed groups who can afford the steep fees to gather signatures will see their efforts succeed!

Lurie has stated in his social media posts: “*We are going to make our ballots shorter and simpler. That long voter packet that you received in 2024 had 15 ballot measures on it.*”

ballot arguments in the voter guide to buy themselves elections?

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Testimony on File #260604 Eliminating Ballot measure Legal Text From Voter Guide (Agenda Item #7) — Oppose

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Between eliminating publication of the legal text of ballot measures from Voter Guides, massively increasing fees to place ballot arguments in the Voter Guide, and raising the bar on the number of signatures required to qualify a measure for the ballot, it's clear Lurie is hard at work in this era of voter suppression from the Federal government, to reduce voters' voices!

Alternatives Not Explored

As noted in previous testimony, alternatives to steep paid argument fee increases have not been explored, such as increasing fees only on ballot arguments placed by recipient ballot committees funded by billionaires.

As well, no mention has been made about reducing the cost of voter guide production, such as reducing the 41 pages of "font- and back-matter" in the voters guides.

Nor has there been any discussion about reducing both the cost of printing the voter guides by eliminating use of cardstock (cardboard) book covers, and switching to a lower grade of newsprint for the inside pages of the voter guide. By contrast the State of California's voter guide's do not use cardstock for the covers, which is a significant cost savings measure.

As well, eliminating card stock covers would likely significantly lower the Department of Elections' mailing costs to mail copies of the Voter Guides to hundreds of thousands of San Francisco voters.

The City should be encouraging greater citizen participation by making it easier for San Franciscans to easily access the legal text of measures they are being asked to pass with their votes at the ballot box. *We've had enough of the billionaire class running our elections and poisoning our democracy!*

The Budget and Appropriations Committee should reject this proposed Ordinance!

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Monette-Shaw

Columnist/Reporter, Westside Observer Newspaper



cc: The Honorable Stephen Sherrill, Supervisor, District 2
The Honorable Alan Wong, Supervisor, District 4
The Honorable Bilal Mahmood, Supervisor, District 5
The Honorable Myrna Melgar, Supervisor, District 7
The Honorable Jackie Fielder, Supervisor, District 9
The Honorable Chyanne Chen, Supervisor, District 11

Angela Calvillo, Clerk of the Board
Alisa Somera, Legislative Deputy Director, Clerk of the Board
Brent Jalipa, Budget and Finance Committee Clerk
John Arntz, Director of Elections
Mayor Daniel Lurie

“ It’s clear Lurie is hard at work in this era of voter suppression from the Federal government, to reduce voters’ voices! ”

“ Nor has there been any discussion about reducing both the cost of printing the voter guides by eliminating use of cardstock (cardboard) book covers, and switching to a lower grade of newsprint for the inside pages of the voter guide. ”



Budget and Appropriations Committee
Board of Supervisors
City & County of San Francisco
Legislative Chamber, Room 250
City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, California 94102

Date: June 16, 2026

Re: Board File # [260603](#), Ordinance amending the Municipal Elections Code to increase the filing fee and per-word fee for paid ballot arguments; and Board File # [260604](#), Ordinance amending the Municipal Elections Code to remove the requirement that the Department of Elections publish the legal text of ballot measures in the Voter Information Pamphlet sent to voters before each election, and to allow the Director of Elections to determine the format of the Voter Information Pamphlet without the Ballot Simplification Committee's approval.

CSFN strongly opposes the passage of the two aforementioned ordinances, which appear in the hearing Agenda as items #6 and #7. The fee increases would result in a 400% increase over the next few years. If enacted it would make it harder for San Francisco residents to afford to submit ballot arguments. This isn't democratic – it makes it more expensive and will only benefit those with deep pockets.

I would expect this type of legislation from the Trump administration – they favor legislation making it harder for voter participation. We in San Francisco can and must do better. Keep the current prices for ballot arguments.

The second ordinance would "***remove the requirement that the Department of Elections publish the legal text of ballot measures in the Voter Information Pamphlet sent to voters before each election, [AND] allow the Director of Elections to determine the format of the Voter Information Pamphlet without the Ballot Simplification Committee's approval.***"

This second ordinance is also undemocratic. The Ballot Simplification Committee is vital. Voters read the voter information pamphlet and it must be written in understandable language.

My friend John Crabtree wrote the next paragraph in his letter. I couldn't have said it better so I'm ending with it.

I urge you to vote no on these two measures, stop the rush to judgement, stand up for democracy and the voices of the people who cannot so easily make their voices heard in the City's corridors of power. The Voter Information Pamphlet is not a revenue source, it is a sunk cost, a vitally important one. The cost that we pay to live in a democracy vs. the less obvious price that we will all pay when that democracy is gone. Democracy has a cost, but autocracy extracts a price too, a steep price.

Deborah Murphy
CSFN President
bridgelady@earthlink.net
(415) 672-1543

From: [Lisa Awbrey](#)
To: [Jalipa, Brent \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Budget and Appropriations Committee - June 17 and June 18 - Agenda Items 6 and 7 - Files #260603 and #260604
Date: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 11:29:30 PM

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Dear Mr. Jalipa:

I write to request that these items (agenda items 6 and 7 on June 17), files #260603 and #260604 be continued or tabled. In this era of voter suppression from the Federal government, why would San Francisco seek to reduce its voters' voices? Why rush this through? I notice that the committee packets include zero written public comment. These changes should be better publicized and the public needs more of an opportunity to respond.

Increasing the cost of ballot arguments means that only the wealthiest (or those with access to independent expenditure committee funds) can have their voices heard. And eliminating the legal text from voter guides reduces the chances of having an informed and educated electorate. Is the purpose to make it easier to deceive the public with misleading ads by those who are able to spend the most?

There could also be some First Amendment issues in reducing the voices of San Francisco citizens and their rights to petition their government, which could end up costing more money, time and effort than these changes save. I have not seen any request for an opinion from the City Attorney on this aspect.

Thank you for considering these concerns.

Very truly yours,
Lisa Awbrey

From: [Sue Vaughan](#)
To: [Jalipa, Brent \(BOS\)](#); [Chan, Connie \(BOS\)](#); [Dorsey, Matt \(BOS\)](#); [Sauter, Danny \(BOS\)](#); [Walton, Shamann \(BOS\)](#); [Mandelman, Rafael \(BOS\)](#); [Lurie, Daniel \(MYR\)](#)
Cc: [Board of Supervisors \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Budget and Appropriations, Item 260603: Please oppose astronomical increases in costs for voter guide arguments
Date: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 12:40:08 PM

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Dear Supervisors,

Please oppose the astronomical increases to submit ballot arguments to the Voter Information Pamphlet proposed by Mayor Lurie. (Item 260603).

In 2019, former Supervisor Aaron Peskin collaborated with an Uber lobbyist to put a proposal on the ballot for an inadequate, per-ride tax on all TNC rides in San Francisco.

A small group of us pooled our money (about \$730) to submit an argument against Supervisor Peskin's and Uber's measure. Our argument was only one of two opposing the measure. Every single one of the 12 yes arguments in the Voter Information Pamphlet was paid for by Uber. The measure passed, but this past spring, Supervisor Peskin participated in Save Muni Zoom meeting. During that meeting, Supervisor Peskin admitted that the 2019 tax had not been enough.

How will individuals and small, self-funded groups be able to get the word out if the costs are raised so astronomically?

I am also alarmed that someone (the mayor?) has proposed eliminating the legal text of measures from the Voter Information Pamphlet.

We are in a David versus Goliath battle against large tech corporations. Mayor Lurie appears to be on the side of Goliath. I hope you will be on the side of David.

Thank you,
Sue Vaughan
District 1

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **48 hills** <donotreply@wordpress.com>
Date: Tue, Jun 16, 2026, 5:41 PM
Subject: Lurie wants to make ballot arguments too expensive for small campaigns
To: <selizabethvaughan@gmail.com>



48 hills

[Read on blog](#) or [Reader](#)

Lurie wants to make ballot arguments too expensive for small campaigns

By **Tim Redmond** on June 16, 2026

Mayor Daniel Lurie is moving to increase by a factor of five the cost of putting an argument in the ballot handbook, undermining the most affordable way for grassroots campaigns to reach voters.

Under his legislation, which no local news media has covered, the cost of an argument would increase from \$200 and \$2 a word to \$1,000 and \$10 a word by 2030. That would mean a 200-word ballot argument that now costs \$600 would cost \$3,000.



Mayor Lurie wants to make it harder for community groups to be heard in local

campaigns

Five ballot arguments, a modest number for a lot of campaigns, would cost \$15,000—more than many community-based campaigns could afford.

That would give big-money operations even more clout in San Francisco.

The measure comes before the Budget and Appropriations Committee **Wednesday/17** at 1:30 pm.

Every registered voter gets a ballot handbook, and it's widely read. The official proponents and opponents of a ballot measure get a free argument and rebuttal, but anyone who puts up the relatively modest fee can also get an argument published.

It's how small-money campaigns get the word out. In an era when the rich are increasingly dominating local politics, the ballot handbook is invaluable.

Now Lurie wants to make it unaffordable.

The excuse is that the price hasn't gone up since 1997, which is true. As the League of Women Voters points out, adjusted for inflation the cost would be about double what it is today, \$400 and \$4 a word.

The price would go up in stages, and would reach \$1,000 and \$10 a word by July 1, 2030.

The Voter's Handbook costs the city money—but it's a public service, not a profit center.

The LWV opposes the measure, saying that

Fair elections depend on an inclusive process, one where the cost of participation does not determine who gets heard by the electorate. The Voter Information Pamphlet is a critical tool for civic participation. Paid ballot arguments allow a diverse range of voices — including concerned individuals, community-based organizations, neighborhood associations, labor groups, small business owners, and advocacy coalitions — to speak directly to San Francisco voters. ... Steep fee increases don't affect everyone equally. Well-funded campaigns and wealthy individuals will be unaffected, while less well-resourced community-based organizations and individuals will be silenced. The result is voter information that reflects only the views of those who can afford to be heard, not the full spectrum of San Francisco's communities.

Richard Ivanhoe, a longtime activist who is also president of the Haight Ashbury Neighborhood Council, noted (speaking for himself, not HANC):

In this era of voter suppression from the Federal government, why would San Francisco reduce its voters' voices? Why rush this through? ... Increasing the cost of ballot arguments means that only the wealthiest (or

those with access to independent expenditure committee funds) can have their voices heard.

This is from a mayor who wants to raise the threshold for signatures to put measures on the ballot, making grassroots politics more difficult. That Charter Amendment is gathering signatures now, and is funded by billionaires Michael Moritz and Chris Larson.

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Automattic, Inc.
60 29th St. #343, San Francisco, CA 94110

From: [regina.sneed](#)
To: [Sherrill, Stephen \(BOS\)](#)
Cc: [SherrillStaff](#); [Shamman Walton](#); [Chan, Connie \(BOS\)](#); [Dorsey, Matt \(BOS\)](#); [Mandelman, Rafael \(BOS\)](#); [Danny Sauter](#); [Jalipa, Brent \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Municipal election code ballot argument fees: file number 260603
Date: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 11:45:54 AM

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Dear Supervisor Sherrill:

This item was heard in Committee this morning and the Committee voted 5/0 to table the item to the call of the chair because of public opposition to raising fees for ballot arguments going up to 10.00 a word by 2030.

I support the SF League of Women voters proposal to amend the measure to increase fees to 4.00 dollars a word with out the additional yearly increases to 10.00 dollars a word.

I also agree with the other people that sent opposition letters that ballot arguments are an important part of the democratic process to allow citizens to express their positions in this widely read publication. It's an expense the city should fund with fees that help cover costs but make fees affordable for all people.

Please consider these suggestions.

Thank you.

Regina Sneed
District Two resident

Sent from my iPhone

From: [todd greenberg](#)
To: [Jalipa, Brent \(BOS\)](#)
Cc: [Chan, Connie \(BOS\)](#); [Dorsey, Matt \(BOS\)](#); [Sauter, Danny \(BOS\)](#); [Board of Supervisors \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Oppose Agenda Items #6 and #7 for 6/17/2026
Date: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 10:04:30 AM

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Re: Oppose Agenda Items #6 and #7
on today's (6/17/2026) Agenda

Dear Clerk Jalipa, Budget and Appropriations Committee Members: Supervisors: Connie Chan, Matt Dorsey, and Danny Sauter, and SF Board of Supervisors,

I, and many others, oppose the Democracy limiting and denying proposals contained in Agenda Items #6 and #7.

We urge the Committee Members to vote "NO" on these bad idea democracy limiting Agenda Items, which will limit fair presentation of Ballot Measures and Statements unnecessarily by significantly increasing costs and by placing sole discretion of voter read content in a single person's power.

There is no proper justification for these actions.

A cost savings argument has been made ,but any theoretical cost savings has not been fully contemplated, properly elucidated, or equally applied as elsewhere throughout the city's decision making processes .

Even If there were to be any actual cost savings, those theoretical savings would not possibly justify the resulting limitations and thwarting of the City's democratic voting processes.

Should these Agenda Items be passed, they will likely be challenged legally at great cost to SF and as more persons become aware of the democracy limiting actions, cause bad press for the City of San Francisco.

I appeal to your sense of democratic process fairness for all your constituents.

Please vote NO today on Agenda Items #6 and #7.

Sincerely Concerned,

Todd Greenberg

Sponsor: Mayor

Ordinance amending the Municipal Elections Code to increase the filing fee and per-word fee for paid ballot arguments.

6/1/26; RECEIVED.

6/2/26; ASSIGNED to the Budget and Appropriations Committee.

6/7/26; NOTICED.

6/14/26; NOTICED.

7. 260604 [Municipal Elections Code - Voter Information Pamphlets]

Sponsor: Mayor

Ordinance amending the Municipal Elections Code to remove the requirement that the Department of Elections publish the legal text of ballot measures in the Voter Information Pamphlet sent to voters before each election, and to allow the Director of Elections to determine the format of the Voter Information Pamphlet without the Ballot Simplification Committee's approval.

6/1/26; RECEIVED.

6/2/26; ASSIGNED to the Budget and Appropriations Committee.

6/12/26; REFERRED TO DEPARTMENT.

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From: [SF League of Pissed Off Voters](#)
To: [Chan, Connie \(BOS\)](#); [Jalipa, Brent \(BOS\)](#); [Arntz, John \(REG\)](#)
Cc: [ChanStaff \(BOS\)](#); [DorseyStaff \(BOS\)](#); [ChenStaff](#); [MahmoodStaff](#); [Felder, Jackie \(BOS\)](#); [MelgarStaff \(BOS\)](#); [MandelmanStaff \(BOS\)](#); [SherrillStaff](#); [SauterStaff](#); [Lurie, Daniel \(MYR\)](#); [SFVote, \(REG\)](#); [WongStaff \(BOS\)](#); [Walton, Shamann \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Opposing Ordinance files 260603 and 260604 (Agenda Items 6 & 7)
Date: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 9:22:35 AM

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June 17, 2026

The Honorable Budget and Appropriations Committee Chair Supervisor Connie Chan
The Honorable San Francisco Board of Supervisors
The Honorable Daniel Lurie, Mayor of San Francisco
John Arntz, Director, San Francisco Department of Elections

RE: Opposing Ordinance files 260603 and 260604

Dear Chair Chan, Supervisors, Mayor Lurie, and Director Arntz,

We oppose the Mayor's amendments to the elections code in this budget trailing legislation, added at the last minute with a waived 30-day rule, that will make our elections less democratic.

We have talked to thousands of San Francisco voters over 20 years of publishing our independent grassroots Pissed Off Voter Guide, and one of the most consistent things we hear is that when people want to understand what these increasingly complicated measures do and how they will impact our communities, they turn to the full text in the voter information pamphlet for the most detailed, neutral take. Removing this full text at a time when unprecedented amounts of money are being poured into SF elections is ridiculous.

We also oppose increasing the ballot argument fees. San Francisco Elections should not be in the business of "pay to play." Ballot arguments are an important part of our democracy, and drastically increasing these fees would restrict voices to only the most wealthy—a disturbing trend we are witnessing in real time in our electoral process.

If the Elections Department needs to save money on the printing costs, let's do more to let voters know they can opt out of the printed booklet if they don't use it (we can help!). We encourage the mayor to use his substantial social media presence to educate voters on this opt out option, and leave the full text and affordable ballot arguments for those who use them.

It's hard enough to convince people that their vote counts at a time when our democracy is under attack in DC and here at home. We should be doing *more* to educate voters, not less. We demand that any changes be made only after outreach to affected stakeholders, and after this November election.

Sincerely,

San Francisco League of Pissed Off Voters

theleaguesf@gmail.com

From: [Dale Carlson](#)
To: [Chan, Connie \(BOS\)](#)
Cc: [Jalipa, Brent \(BOS\)](#); [Dorsey, Matt \(BOS\)](#); [Sauter, Danny \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Ballot Argument Fees (260603)
Date: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 9:17:37 AM

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Dear Supervisor Chan:

I have been involved with San Francisco political campaigns for nearly 50 years, almost entirely siding with grassroots, community-driven ballot measures. Some efforts had so little money that the only affordable campaign literature was the Voter Handbook and its paid arguments. Many of those were successful, despite very well-financed opposition.

I don't know of another city that values and promotes public participation in civic affairs as much as San Francisco. Indeed, I believe that's a fundamental "San Francisco value" that special interests and conservative pundits enjoy disparaging. For me, it's a tremendous source of pride.

The Voter Handbook is the single piece of campaign literature guaranteed to reach the hands of every voter. At current rates, it's not cheap but still a very good value. And so far as I know, those rates adequately cover the costs of printing paid arguments.

I'm certainly not aware of any shortfall that would justify a five-fold increase in rates, as the Mayor's legislation proposes. If adopted, they will silence important debate and diminish participation in the political process, particularly by grassroots organizations and private citizens. Indeed, I find the proposal profoundly undemocratic and of benefit only to well-heeled special interests.

I hope that you will reject this ill-advised proposal.

Thank you.

Carlson

[Dale A. Carlson](#)
Managing Director, Carlson Advisors
Strategic Communications | Public Affairs
415/310-8616

From: [George Wooding](#)
To: [Jalipa, Brent \(BOS\)](#); [Chan, Connie \(BOS\)](#); [Dorsey, Matt \(BOS\)](#); danny.sauter@safgov.org; [Mandelman, Rafael \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: VOTE NO ON ORDINANCES 260603 & 260604
Date: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 9:09:56 AM

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Budget and Appropriations Committee

Board of Supervisors

City & County of San Francisco

Legislative Chamber, Room 250

City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place

San Francisco, California 94102 **THE BOS CAN SLEEP SOUNDLY KNOWING THAT**

JUNE 17

DEAR COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

I OPPOSE THE PASSAGE OF ORDINANCE(S) 260603 & 260604.

260603 AND 260604 SHOULD BE KILLED IN THE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE. THE PUBLIC NEEDS TIME TO DIGEST WHY THESE ITEMS HAVE BEEN FAST-TRACKED BEHIND THE PUBLIC'S BACK. THE SPEED OF THESE ITEMS' PASSAGE IS BREATHTAKING AND IRRESPONSIBLE. THE LACK OF PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY IS NOT GOOD GOVERNANCE.

AS THE COST OF BALLOT ARGUMENTS WILL BE INCREASED BY 400% , AVERAGE CITIZENS WILL BE FINANCIALLY FORCED TO STOP COMMENTING ON BALLOT ITEMS. THIS IS A BLATANT ATTEMPT TO FORCE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION OFF OF THE BALLOT. ONLY THE WEALTHY NEED APPLY.

FEW CITIZENS HAVE HEARD OF LEGISTAR OR BALLOTPEDIA. BY NOT PUBLISHING LEGAL TEXT MANY CITIZENS WILL NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY ARE VOTING FOR OR AGAINST IN GRANULAR DETAIL.

AS SF NOW HAS A “STRONG MAYOR” WHICH REMOVES CITIZEN’S PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT COMMITTEES COUPLED WITH THE PASSAGE OF THESE ORDINANCES, IT APPEARS THAT SF’S POLITICAL BUREAUCRACY IS TRYING TO LIMIT CITIZEN PARTICIPATION OF THE VERY PEOPLE THAT THEY ARE SUPPOSED TO REPRESENT.

PLEASE VOTE NO ON ORDINANCES 260603 & 260604

RESPECTFULLY,

**GEORGE WOODING
11 DELLBROOK AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO CA. 94131
415 695-1393**

GSWOODING@GMAIL.COM

From: [Jean Barish](#)
To: [DorseyStaff \(BOS\)](#); [Waltonstaff \(BOS\)](#); [MandelmanStaff \(BOS\)](#); [Chan, Connie \(BOS\)](#); [SauterStaff](#)
Cc: [Jalipa, Brent \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Budget and Appropriations Committee July 17 Meeting - Agenda Items 6 & 7
Date: Tuesday, June 16, 2026 8:54:20 PM

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

I am writing in opposition to Items 6 and 7 on the June 17 Agenda of the Budget and Appropriations Committee.

Both measures are being rushed through the Board of Supervisors Budget and Appropriations Committee without adequate public review. Although the Mayor's Budget Director submitted both pieces of legislation on Monday June 1, it took two full work weeks until Friday June 12 before the public learned the legislation would be heard five days later on June 17.

Board File # 260603 will amend the Municipal Elections Code to increase the filing fee and per-word fee for paid ballot arguments. Board File #260604 will remove the requirement that the Department of Elections publish the legal text of ballot measures in the Voter Information Pamphlet sent to voters before each election and allow the Director of Elections to determine the format of the Voter Information Pamphlet without the Ballot Simplification Committee's approval.

Both these measures will weaken democratic elections in San Francisco, and will likely hand over even more power to special-interest recipient committees funded by billionaires to adversely influence San Francisco elections, further eroding the right of all voters to participate in our election process regardless of their economic status.

Please do not approve these unfair, anti-democratic Ordinances.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jean

Jean B Barish, Esq., MS, MA
jeanbbarish@hotmail.com

From: [John Crabtree](#)
To: [Jalipa, Brent \(BOS\)](#); [Chan, Connie \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Public Testimony on Board File #260603 & #260604
Date: Tuesday, June 16, 2026 5:28:41 PM

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Dear Clerk Jalipa and Chair Chan; embedded below please find my written testimony on Board File #260603 and #260604 for tomorrow's Board of Supervisors Budget and Appropriations Committee hearing. Please post these comments and public testimony in the "Public Correspondence" files for each agenda item and Board File mentioned herein, which includes Agenda item #6 (Board File #260603) and Agenda item #7 (Board File # 260604). Thank you,
John Crabtree, D4 resident (address and contact information at bottom of this public testimony document).

Budget and Appropriations Committee
Board of Supervisors
City & County of San Francisco
Legislative Chamber, Room 250
City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, California 94102

Date: June 17, 2026 (submitted June 16, 2026)

Re: Board File # [260603](#), Ordinance amending the Municipal Elections Code to increase the filing fee and per-word fee for paid ballot arguments; and Board File #[260604](#), Ordinance amending the Municipal Elections Code to remove the requirement that the Department of Elections publish the legal text of ballot measures in the Voter Information Pamphlet sent to voters before each election, and to allow the Director of Elections to determine the format of the Voter Information Pamphlet without the Ballot Simplification Committee's approval.

First and foremost, I oppose the passage of the two aforementioned ordinances, which appear in today's hearing Agenda as items #6 and #7, respectively.

The per-word ballot argument fee increase is neither small nor gradual. It is a 100% increase in the first year, which is then duplicated 3 more times over the "phase-in" for a total of a 400% increase.

Neither the BOS nor the DOE, nor, for that matter, the Mayor's office appears to have

considered any other potential cost savings or revenue enhancements, only a 400% increase in per-word filing fees.

The ballot argument filing (or submission) fee increase is also large (400%) and is not gradual either; again, a 100% increase in the first year repeated 3 more times on July 1st each of the next three consecutive years.

These are not small changes. The most recent paid ballot argument that I submitted (in opposition to Prop A, June 2026) cost \$548. My quick, back of the envelope calculation finds that the same ballot argument (with the same number of words) would eventually cost me \$2,740 under this proposal.

Even in the second year of the fee increases in this proposal, a similar ballot argument (with the same number of words, would cost \$1,096.

The second ordinance would ***"remove the requirement that the Department of Elections publish the legal text of ballot measures in the Voter Information Pamphlet sent to voters before each election, [AND] allow the Director of Elections to determine the format of the Voter Information Pamphlet without the Ballot Simplification Committee's approval."***

Perhaps the BOS needs to schedule a presentation on the anti-democratic limitations of substituting an online-only VIP for a printed VIP mailed to every voter. There are multiple experts that could provide such a presentation.

Does the Committee view the potential and eventual cost savings from "per-word filing fee increases" of \$300,000 as crucial to necessary overall savings in this budget process? Keeping in mind that the savings would be eventual and the savings would only be \$75K in the first year, which would actually be in next year's budget, meaning that there would be zero budgetary impact in this current budget round for this provision.

The second ordinance – Board File #260604 – would, by DOE estimate – which considering DOE's past history with financial estimates, is likely problematic – only generate \$66,000 in budgetary savings. Moreover, since DOE considers no additional printing and mailing costs for sending copies of legal text to voters that request them because they cannot access ballot measure legal text online; and since DOE estimates no other costs for the distribution of ballot measure legal text to voters requesting it, what reason is there to NOT assume that the budgetary savings number would be much lower than \$66,000? Or does the DOE intend to limit the number of people who can request a physical copy of legal text when they are unable to access it online?

I believe that the purpose of the Mayor's Office (and Department of Elections) in resurrecting

this proposal may very well have nothing to do with saving \$66,000 in this budget round, out of a global city budget of nearly \$16 billion Every journalist, analyst and investigator that has looked at this proposal, which I grant you is not many, has called out that it appears that the Mayor simply wants to soften the electoral ground in advance of his Charter "reform" and Commission "streamlining" efforts on the November ballot and to otherwise sweep away democratic processes and bar opposition voices from the ballot via sweeping autocratic legalism dressed up as budgetary "savings" and electoral "reforms."

When so many in City Hall are so busy exclaiming that we are in an "affordability crisis;" including the Mayor, how can you all turn around and show no concern for whether or not San Francisco residents can "afford" to participate in our democratic processes? Or have a voice on the ballot and the issues of the day?

It is two-faced to raise concern about "affordability" but price everyday San Francisco residents out of the democratic marketplace of ideas. It is the essence of hypocrisy.

I urge you to vote no on these two measures, stop the rush to judgement, stand up for democracy and the voices of the people who cannot so easily make their voices heard in the City's corridors of power. The Voter Information Pamphlet is not a revenue source, it is a sunk cost, a vitally important one. The cost that we pay to live in a democracy vs. the less obvious price that we will all pay when that democracy is gone. Democracy has a cost, but autocracy extracts a price too, a steep price.

John Crabtree
D4 Resident
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The Sunset
San Francisco, CA 94122
563-581-2867
johncrabtree52@gmail.com



June 16, 2026

VIA EMAIL

The Honorable Budget and Appropriations Committee Chair Supervisor Connie Chan
The Honorable San Francisco Board of Supervisors
The Honorable Daniel Lurie, Mayor of San Francisco
John Arntz, Director, San Francisco Department of Elections

RE: OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED – Proposed ordinance file #260603 amending the Municipal Elections Code to increase the filing fee and per word fee for paid ballot arguments

Dear Chair Chan, Supervisors, Mayor Lurie, and Director Arntz,

The League of Women Voters of San Francisco writes to oppose, unless it is amended, Ordinance File #260603, which would change the Municipal Elections Code to increase the filing fee and per-word fee for paid ballot arguments in the Voter Information Pamphlet.

Fair elections depend on an inclusive process, one where the cost of participation does not determine who gets heard by the electorate. The Voter Information Pamphlet is a critical tool for civic participation. Paid ballot arguments allow a diverse range of voices — including concerned individuals, community-based organizations, neighborhood associations, labor groups, small business owners, and advocacy coalitions — to speak directly to San Francisco voters.

Updating the \$200 ballot argument filing fee plus \$2 per word fee, unchanged since 1997, to \$400 plus \$4 per word starting July 1, 2027, is roughly in line with what inflation would justify. However, the proposal goes far beyond that, with fees reaching \$1,000 plus \$10 per word by 2030, a significant five-fold increase.

Rather than adopting the full fee increase schedule, we encourage the Board to approve only an increase to a \$400 filing fee plus \$4 per word starting July 1, 2027, and conduct an evaluation with broad community input to determine an equitable fee structure.

Cost-prohibitive fees could shut out community voices.

Steep fee increases don't affect everyone equally. Well-funded campaigns and wealthy individuals will be unaffected, while less well-resourced community-based organizations

Empowering voters. Defending democracy.

League of Women Voters of San Francisco

582 Market Street, Suite 615, San Francisco, CA 94104 ■ 415-989-8683 ■ lwvsf@lwvsf.org ■ lwvsf.org

and individuals will be silenced. The result is voter information that reflects only the views of those who can afford to be heard, not the full spectrum of San Francisco's communities.

A five-fold fee increase that directly affects the costs of participating in elections warrants more public input than a trailing ordinance with a waived 30-day hold allows. San Franciscans deserve adequate time to review, respond, and propose alternatives.

Before approving increases beyond an inflation adjustment, we strongly recommend the Board consult with community-based organizations and other stakeholders in their districts who could be priced out of having their voice in the Voter Information Pamphlet.

The Voter Information Pamphlet is a civic necessity, not cost recovery.

We recognize that the City and the Department of Elections are navigating significant budget pressures. At the same time, the City has a longstanding practice of supporting the costs of the Voter Information Pamphlet as an essential civic resource for every voter.

Restructuring the Voter Information Pamphlet as something that must pay for itself through argument fees risks subordinating voter service to cost recovery — reorienting the document around the revenue it generates rather than the information voters need.

The League opposes the proposed schedule of ballot argument filing fee changes and urges the Board to consider alternatives.

Democracy works best when participation is accessible, equitable, inclusive, and fair. These fees, as proposed, move in the opposite direction.

Thank you for your public service and your consideration of these concerns. We welcome the opportunity to discuss this further.

Sincerely,



Kate Degelau-Pierce
Co-President
League of Women Voters of San Francisco
president@lwvsf.org

CC: Board of Supervisors Budget and Appropriations Committee Clerk Brent Jalipa, San Francisco Elections Commission, Elections Commission Clerk Marisa Davis.

Patrick Monette-Shaw

975 Sutter Street, Apt. 6
San Francisco, CA 94109
Phone: (415) 292-6969 • e-mail: pmonette-shaw@earthlink.net

June 16, 2026

Budget and Appropriations Committee

Board of Supervisors

The Honorable Connie Chan, Chair

The Honorable Matt Dorsey, Member

The Honorable Danny Sauter, Member

The Honorable Shamann Walton, Member

The Honorable Rafael Mandelman, Member

1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place

San Francisco, CA 94102

“ These fee increases will restrict the pool of diverse paid ballot arguments to only wealthy individuals, endowed non-profits, and astroturf organizations, drowning out the voices of San Francisco’s average ‘John Q. Public’ or ‘Joe the Plumber’.”

Re: Testimony on File 260603 Ballot Argument Fees (Agenda Item #6)

Dear Chair Chan, and Members of the Budget and Appropriations Committee,

Regarding agenda item # 6 on the Budget and Appropriations Committee’s June 17 meeting agenda, please forward a Committee Recommendation to the full Board of Supervisors recommending this Ordinance be closed without action, for the reasons below.

Table 1: My 295-Word Paid Ballot Argument in 2008

	Current Fees \$2 / Word + \$200	Proposed Fees \$10 / Word + \$1,000		Percent Change Increase
My Paid Ballot Argument in 2008	Filing Fee	Filing Fee	Increase	Increase
Per-Word Fee, 295-Words	\$ 590.00	\$ 2,950.00	\$2,360.00	400%
Filing Submission Fee	\$ 200.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 800.00	400%
Total Cost:	\$ 790.00	\$ 3,950.00	\$3,160.00	400%

In 2008 I submitted a 295-word voter Guide argument that cost me a total of \$790 that I paid out of my own savings — which I could afford, although it required switching to peanut-butter sandwiches for dinner.

Under the referenced resurrected proposal, fee increases would have raised my costs to \$3,950, a \$3,160 increase. At \$3,950, I wouldn’t have placed the voter guide argument, and my “*Joe-the-Plumber*” voice would have been silenced!

On December 10, 2025, the Supervisor’s Budget and Finance Committee’s meeting [agenda](#) contained Agenda item 6 to consider an Ordinance submitted by the Department of Elections on May 9, 2025 — without any Supervisors as co-sponsors — to increase the amount of fees required to place paid arguments in the voter guide. That December hearing had taken seven months to be scheduled for a hearing.

Of note, when the Department of Elections submitted the Proposed fee increase Ordinance in May 2025, it was assigned under the Board of Supervisors 30-Day rule to the Budget and Finance Committee, and a hearing wasn’t scheduled for nearly seven months.

On December 10, Budget Chair the meeting notes revealed Budget Chair Commie Chan said that at the last minute, the Elections Department had requested the item be continued to the “*Call of the Chair*,” given the fact that it would be a significant increase to the ballot argument fees and that “*we should have further discussion likely, besides in addition to a public hearing here. I think that Department of Elections, realizing and recognizing more work needs to be done, or more public conversation needs to be had before we decide on the fee increase. So with that, let’s go to public comment on the continuance of this item top the Call of the Chair.*”

“ The Department of Elections realized more work needed to be done. Supervisor Chan and the Budget Committee placed the proposal to the *Call of the Chair* because more public conversation needs to be had before we decide on the fee increase. *No such additional public conversation was ever held!*”

With that, the Elections Department proposal was essentially tabled, and not resurrected for the next seven months.

Between now and then, **there has been no follow-up work that has been done, and there has been no additional public conversation before deciding on the fee increase.** More information should still be sought from the Department of Elections, and other options than fee increases explored, instead.

Instead, Mayor Lurie is now attempting to pin-the-tail-on-the-Donkey, by reintroducing essentially the same fee increases but spreading them out as incremental fee increases starting on July 1, 2027 and annually increasing the fees in each of the three fiscal years, ending in July 2030. Spreading out a 400% cumulative fee increase over time does not make it less onerous on members of the public.

And by contrast, the Mayor’s proposed Ordinance has ben granted a waiver from the 30-Day Rule by Board President Mandelman, and is now being rush through, purportedly as “*trailing legislation*” to the Mayor’s budget submission for the Fiscal Year set to begin on July 1, 2026.

Why was it deemed a major policy change to City policy in May 2025 subject to Board Rule 3.22, and now a year-and-a-half later it is now not subject to the same 30-Day rule? Who is this Mayor and this Board of Supervisors trying to fool?

Will Stifle Diverse Perspectives

First, both the per-word increase (from \$2 to \$10 per word) and the filing fee increase (from \$200 per ballot argument to \$1,000 for the submission fee) each represent a 400% net change increase to both fees. It’s unfair to expect citizen–voters who want to place voter guide arguments to shoulder a 400% increase, to help subsidize the voter guide.

For instance, in 2008 I placed a paid voter guide argument that cost me \$790, shown in Table 1. The proposed fee increase would *quintuple* my costs to just shy of \$4,000 — that 400% change increase. While I could afford that as an individual before I retired and now as a retiree, it would now be cost prohibitive.

These fee increases will restrict the pool of diverse paid ballot arguments to only wealthy individuals, endowed non-profits, and astroturf organizations, drowning out the voices of San Francisco’s average “*John Q. Public*” or “*Joe the Plumber*.”

Year-Over-Year Cost Increases

Second, based on the data presented by the Elections Department shows that total costs for typesetting, printing, and mailing fees for the November 2024 voter guide totaled \$2.47 million, as shown in Table 2, 75.3% of which was for “*front and back matter*” pages separate from paid ballot arguments, and just 24.7% was for paid ballot arguments. Table 2 above shows that between 2020 and 2024, the per-page price of each page rose by \$2,533 each page, from \$5,812 to \$8,345 per page. Table 2 also shows the there was a staggering increase of 48 additional “*front-and-back-matter*” pages (non-paid arguments pages), from 175 such pages in 2020, to 223 such pages in 2024. Why was it necessary to add so many additional “*front-and-back-matter*” pages, which cost an additional \$400,560 to the total voter guide costs?

No explanation was given why the cost-per-page increased by \$2,533 between 2020 and 2024!

Table 2: Ballot Measure Costs Year-Over-Year

November 2020 Voter Guide						November 2024 Voter Guide						Raw Change 2020 to 2024			% Change								
	"Front & Back Matter"		Paid Arguments		Total	"Front & Back Matter"		Paid Arguments		Total	% Mix of Total	"Front Matter"		Paid Arguments		Total	"Front Matter"		Paid Arguments		Total		
Typesetting	\$	82,974	\$	27,026	\$	110,000	\$	186,780	\$	61,143	\$	247,923	10.0%	\$	103,806	\$	34,117	\$	137,923	125.1%	126.2%	125.4%	
Printing	\$	835,114	\$	272,009	\$	1,107,123	\$	1,471,805	\$	481,802	\$	1,953,607	79.1%	\$	636,691	\$	209,793	\$	846,484	76.2%	77.1%	76.5%	
Mailing	\$	98,950	\$	32,230	\$	131,180	\$	202,351	\$	66,240	\$	268,591	10.9%	\$	103,401	\$	34,010	\$	137,411	104.5%	105.5%	104.7%	
Total:	\$	1,017,038	\$	331,265	\$	1,348,303	\$	1,860,936	\$	609,185	\$	2,470,121	100.0%	\$	843,898	\$	277,920	\$	1,121,818	83.0%	83.9%	83.2%	
% of Total Costs:		75.4%		24.6%				75.3%		24.7%				75.2%		24.8%			99.7%		100.8%		
# of Pages		175		57		232		223		73		296		48		16			64		27.4%	28.1%	27.6%
Per-Page Total Price:	\$		\$	5,812					\$	8,345								\$	2,533				
Increased Costs for Additional 48-Page "Front Matter" at \$8,345-per-page:												\$	400,560	\$	133,520	\$	534,080						
Percent Share of Increased \$400,560 of November 2024 \$2,470,121 Total Cost:												16.2%											

“ Mayor Lurie is now spreading out incremental fee increases over four years. Spreading out a 400% cumulative fee increase over time does not make it less onerous on members of the public! ”

“ No explanation was given why the cost-per-page increased by \$2,533 between 2020 and 2024, from \$5,812 to \$8,345 per page! ”

June 16, 2026

Testimony on File 260603 — Ballot Argument Fees (Agenda Item #6)

Page 3

Eliminating those additional pages — saving \$400,000 — would save almost as much as the \$500,000 Mr. Arntz claims could be saved by increasing the paid ballot argument fees. ***That should be done first!***

Table 2 also shows:

Of the \$1,121,818 total increase in costs between 2020 and 2024, fully 75.2% of it was for “*font-and-back-matter*” cost, not paid ballot arguments, but the Elections Department has requested only the fees for paid ballot arguments be charged additional fees. Why aren’t the fees being increased for the “*front-and-back matter*” pages?

- The typesetting fees have increased across the two election cycles by 125.4%, while the printing fees have only increased by 76.5%. Since the paid ballot arguments are required to be submitted electronically to the Elections Department why have the typesetting fees increased by over 125%? Has the Elections Department attempted to obtain a better contractor to reduce fees for the typesetting? And has the Elections Department not explored having the typesetting done by City staff in the Reproduction and Mail Services (ReproMail) unit of City government?
- The nearly \$2 million for printing costs represents fully 79% of the entire costs for 2024. Again, the additional 48 pages of “*font-and-back matter*” increased between 2020 and 2024 needs to be reviewed for necessity, and all 223 pages of the “*front-and-back matter*” should be reviewed to determine how much of it could reasonably be eliminated, like the full-page ad from Disability Rights California, and a full-page map of San Francisco’s supervisorial districts, which readers of the voter guide don’t care about, or read.

Minimal Cost of Voter Guide Compared to City Budget

Using the costs of the 2024 Voter Information Pamphlet, the breakout of the “*front-and-back-matter*” costs *vs.* the paid ballot argument costs reveal an infinitesimal portion of the total \$16.9 **billion** City budget. As Table 3 shows, the \$500,000 Mr. Arntz seeks to save represents a ridiculous twenty-nine ten-thousandths of one percent, or 0.0029 of one . percent! Similarly, the \$609,186 in costs for the paid voter guide arguments represents just thirty-six ten-thousandths of one percent.

Table 3: Ballot Measure Costs as a Percent of City Budget

Category	Amount	% of \$16.9 Billion City Budget	Pronunciation
“Front Matter”	\$ 1,860,936	0.0110%	One hundred and ten ten-thousandths of one percent
Paid Ballot Arguments	\$ 609,185	0.0036%	Thirty-six ten-thousandths of one percent
Total Voter Guide	\$ 2,470,121	0.0146%	One hundred forty-six ten-thousandths of one percent
Projected \$500,000 General Fund Savings	\$ 500,000	0.0029%	Twenty-nine ten-thousandths of one percent

And the total \$2.4 million in costs for the 2024 voter guide represents just one hundred forty-six ten-thousandths of one percent of the City budget. ***Increasing the ballot argument fees is just scrounging around for chump change!***

Other Concerns

Third, the PowerPoint presentation from the Elections Department contains errors in the reported **actual** “*word count fees*” collected in the November 2020, June 2022, and November 2022 elections. Based on the actual number reported as the “*Word Count*” for paid ballot arguments reported on line 5 of the election Department’s table, the actual “*Word Count Fee’s Collected*” show they were calculated at \$7.00 per word, not the \$2.00 per word actual charge. That data is over-reported and inaccurate. **It’s an embarrassing math error.**

Fourth, and most importantly, the accompanying memo from John Arntz, Director of Elections at the Elections Department dated May 9, 2025 claims that by increasing the per-word fee from \$2 to \$10 per word, and increasing the filing fee from \$200 per paid argument to \$1,000 as the filing fee, it could potentially reduce \$500,000 annually from the impact on support carried by the General Fund.

There’s a far **less onerous solution** that could decrease the total costs of the “**Voter Information Pamphlet**” (VIP) by **\$400,000** that should be done first:

June 16, 2026

Testimony on File 260603 — Ballot Argument Fees (Agenda Item #6)

Page 4

Eliminate the mushrooming “*front-and-back matter*” pages in the VIP that have mushroomed from 48 additional pages (from 175 pages in 2020 and to 223 pages in 2024) — increasing the VIP from a total of 232 pages to 296 pages, while at the same time the number of pages devoted to paid ballot arguments has only added 16 additional pages (from 57 pages in November 2020 to 73 pages in November 2024). There has been no explanation offered as to why the non-paid ballot argument pages in the VIP increased by 48 pages, that at \$8,345 per page tacked on \$400,560 in additional costs.

If the non-paid-argument pages had remained constant at the 175 such pages that appeared in the November 2020 voter guide, that \$400,560 for the additional 48 such pages could have been avoided entirely. Why did the November 2024 VIP need those additional 48 pages, and what **essential** material was needed on those extra 48 pages?

But Mr. Arntz didn’t provide additional information germane to this discussion.

Additional Data Needed From Elections Department

A quick review of the 2024 Voter Information Pamphlet reveals that for the “*Proposition D*” boards and commissions ballot measure, there were just 16 paid ballot arguments in favor of “*Prop. D.*” All of them were paid for by the proponents’ recipient committee, *TogetherSF Action*. Not one of the ballot arguments supporting “*Prop. D.*” were placed by individual San Franciscans, or other organizations.

The Board of Supervisors should request additional data from the Elections Department, including a breakout of the number of paid arguments supporting vs. opposing each ballot measure on the 2024 municipal ballot, and provide the Board of Supervisors with a breakout of 1) How many were paid for by Recipient Committees, 2) How many were paid for by other organizations, with a breakout by types of organizations (such as ***YIMBY Action***) and other “*candidate controlled*” committees, and 3) How many of them were paid for by San Franciscans acting as *bona fide* “individuals.”

After all, the filing procedures include “***Ballot Argument Control Sheet A,***” which requires the ballot argument submitter to specify whether they are filing as an individual or as an organization, and by what type of organization.

The Board of Supervisors should also ask the Elections Department to provide a breakout by number of the types of “*front-and-back matter*” pages, and whether they are legally required, or could be eliminated, and whether any of those pages involve raising revenue for the ad placements.

The Board of Supervisors should also ask the Elections Department to specify what actions they have taken to date, if any, to reduce the typesetting and printing fees.

Alternative Pricing

Finally, the Board of Supervisors should consider requiring the Department of Elections to propose an alternative plan to increase the filing fee and per-word fees for only the candidate controlled committees, and the recipient committees, who have greater resources at their disposal and can afford the increased fees, and or develop a discounted fee structure for individual San Franciscans submitting paid ballot arguments as private citizens. That might greatly **increase** the diversity of opinions offered as pro and con arguments to assist voters make more informed choices before casting their ballots!

“ Propose an alternative plan to increase fees for only the candidate-controlled committees, and recipient committees, who have greater resources at their disposal! ”

The City should be encouraging greater citizen participation in paid voter guide arguments, not suppressing our voices through higher fees. ***We’ve had enough of the billionaire class running our elections and poisoning our democracy!***

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Monette-Shaw

Columnist/Reporter, Westside Observer Newspaper

cc: The Honorable Stephen Sherrill, Supervisor, District 2
The Honorable Alan Wong, Supervisor, District 4
The Honorable Bilal Mahmood, Supervisor, District 5
The Honorable Myrna Melgar, Supervisor, District 7
The Honorable Jackie Fielder, Supervisor, District 9
The Honorable Chyanne Chen, Supervisor, District 11

Angela Calvillo, Clerk of the Board
Alisa Somera, Legislative Deputy Director, Clerk of the Board
Brent Jalipa, Budget and Finance Committee Clerk
John Arntz, Director of Elections
Mayor Daniel Lurie

From: [Richard Ivanhoe](#)
To: [Chan, Connie \(BOS\)](#); [Jalipa, Brent \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Budget and Appropriations Committee - June 17 and June 18 - Agenda Items 6 and 7 - Files #260603 and #260604
Date: Monday, June 15, 2026 8:43:02 PM

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I am requesting that these items (agenda items 6 and 7 on June 17), files #260603 and #260604 be continued or tabled. In this era of voter suppression from the Federal government, why would San Francisco reduce its voters' voices? Why rush this through? I notice that the committee packets include zero written public comment. These changes should be better publicized and the public needs more of an opportunity to respond.

Increasing the cost of ballot arguments means that only the wealthiest (or those with access to independent expenditure committee funds) can have their voices heard. And eliminating the legal text from voter guides reduces the chances of having an informed and educated electorate. Is the purpose to make it easier to deceive the public with misleading ads by those who are able to spend the most?

There could be some First Amendment issues in reducing the voices of San Francisco citizens and their rights to petition their government, which could end up costing more than these changes save. I did not see any request for an opinion from the City Attorney on this aspect.

Thank you for considering these concerns,

--Richard Ivanhoe--

From: [todd greenberg](#)
To: [Jalipa, Brent \(BOS\)](#)
Cc: [Chan, Connie \(BOS\)](#); [Dorsey, Matt \(BOS\)](#); [Sauter, Danny \(BOS\)](#); [Board of Supervisors \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Oppose Agenda Items #6 and #7 for 6/17/2026
Date: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 10:04:30 AM

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Re: Oppose Agenda Items #6 and #7
on today's (6/17/2026) Agenda

Dear Clerk Jalipa, Budget and Appropriations Committee Members: Supervisors: Connie Chan, Matt Dorsey, and Danny Sauter, and SF Board of Supervisors,

I, and many others, oppose the Democracy limiting and denying proposals contained in Agenda Items #6 and #7.

We urge the Committee Members to vote "NO" on these bad idea democracy limiting Agenda Items, which will limit fair presentation of Ballot Measures and Statements unnecessarily by significantly increasing costs and by placing sole discretion of voter read content in a single person's power.

There is no proper justification for these actions.

A cost savings argument has been made ,but any theoretical cost savings has not been fully contemplated, properly elucidated, or equally applied as elsewhere throughout the city's decision making processes .

Even If there were to be any actual cost savings, those theoretical savings would not possibly justify the resulting limitations and thwarting of the City's democratic voting processes.

Should these Agenda Items be passed, they will likely be challenged legally at great cost to SF and as more persons become aware of the democracy limiting actions, cause bad press for the City of San Francisco.

I appeal to your sense of democratic process fairness for all your constituents.

Please vote NO today on Agenda Items #6 and #7.

Sincerely Concerned,

Todd Greenberg

6. 260603 [Municipal Elections Code - Ballot Argument Fees]

Sponsor: Mayor

Ordinance amending the Municipal Elections Code to increase the filing fee and per-word

fee for paid ballot arguments.

6/1/26; RECEIVED.

6/2/26; ASSIGNED to the Budget and Appropriations Committee.

6/7/26; NOTICED.

6/14/26; NOTICED.

7. 260604 [Municipal Elections Code - Voter Information Pamphlets]

Sponsor: Mayor

Ordinance amending the Municipal Elections Code to remove the requirement that the Department of Elections publish the legal text of ballot measures in the Voter Information Pamphlet sent to voters before each election, and to allow the Director of Elections to determine the format of the Voter Information Pamphlet without the Ballot Simplification Committee's approval.

6/1/26; RECEIVED.

6/2/26; ASSIGNED to the Budget and Appropriations Committee.

6/12/26; REFERRED TO DEPARTMENT.

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From: [SF League of Pissed Off Voters](#)
To: [Chan, Connie \(BOS\)](#); [Jalipa, Brent \(BOS\)](#); [Arntz, John \(REG\)](#)
Cc: [ChanStaff \(BOS\)](#); [DorseyStaff \(BOS\)](#); [ChenStaff](#); [MahmoodStaff](#); [Felder, Jackie \(BOS\)](#); [MelgarStaff \(BOS\)](#); [MandelmanStaff \(BOS\)](#); [SherrillStaff](#); [SauterStaff](#); [Lurie, Daniel \(MYR\)](#); [SFVote, \(REG\)](#); [WongStaff \(BOS\)](#); [Walton, Shamann \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Opposing Ordinance files 260603 and 260604 (Agenda Items 6 & 7)
Date: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 9:22:35 AM

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June 17, 2026

The Honorable Budget and Appropriations Committee Chair Supervisor Connie Chan
The Honorable San Francisco Board of Supervisors
The Honorable Daniel Lurie, Mayor of San Francisco
John Arntz, Director, San Francisco Department of Elections

RE: Opposing Ordinance files 260603 and 260604

Dear Chair Chan, Supervisors, Mayor Lurie, and Director Arntz,

We oppose the Mayor's amendments to the elections code in this budget trailing legislation, added at the last minute with a waived 30-day rule, that will make our elections less democratic.

We have talked to thousands of San Francisco voters over 20 years of publishing our independent grassroots Pissed Off Voter Guide, and one of the most consistent things we hear is that when people want to understand what these increasingly complicated measures do and how they will impact our communities, they turn to the full text in the voter information pamphlet for the most detailed, neutral take. Removing this full text at a time when unprecedented amounts of money are being poured into SF elections is ridiculous.

We also oppose increasing the ballot argument fees. San Francisco Elections should not be in the business of "pay to play." Ballot arguments are an important part of our democracy, and drastically increasing these fees would restrict voices to only the most wealthy—a disturbing trend we are witnessing in real time in our electoral process.

If the Elections Department needs to save money on the printing costs, let's do more to let voters know they can opt out of the printed booklet if they don't use it (we can help!). We encourage the mayor to use his substantial social media presence to educate voters on this opt out option, and leave the full text and affordable ballot arguments for those who use them.

It's hard enough to convince people that their vote counts at a time when our democracy is under attack in DC and here at home. We should be doing *more* to educate voters, not less. We demand that any changes be made only after outreach to affected stakeholders, and after this November election.

Sincerely,

San Francisco League of Pissed Off Voters

theleaguesf@gmail.com

From: [Dale Carlson](#)
To: [Chan, Connie \(BOS\)](#)
Cc: [Jalipa, Brent \(BOS\)](#); [Dorsey, Matt \(BOS\)](#); [Sauter, Danny \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Ballot Argument Fees (260603)
Date: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 9:17:37 AM

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Dear Supervisor Chan:

I have been involved with San Francisco political campaigns for nearly 50 years, almost entirely siding with grassroots, community-driven ballot measures. Some efforts had so little money that the only affordable campaign literature was the Voter Handbook and its paid arguments. Many of those were successful, despite very well-financed opposition.

I don't know of another city that values and promotes public participation in civic affairs as much as San Francisco. Indeed, I believe that's a fundamental "San Francisco value" that special interests and conservative pundits enjoy disparaging. For me, it's a tremendous source of pride.

The Voter Handbook is the single piece of campaign literature guaranteed to reach the hands of every voter. At current rates, it's not cheap but still a very good value. And so far as I know, those rates adequately cover the costs of printing paid arguments.

I'm certainly not aware of any shortfall that would justify a five-fold increase in rates, as the Mayor's legislation proposes. If adopted, they will silence important debate and diminish participation in the political process, particularly by grassroots organizations and private citizens. Indeed, I find the proposal profoundly undemocratic and of benefit only to well-heeled special interests.

I hope that you will reject this ill-advised proposal.

Thank you.

Carlson

[Dale A. Carlson](#)
Managing Director, Carlson Advisors
Strategic Communications | Public Affairs
415/310-8616

From: [George Wooding](#)
To: [Jalipa, Brent \(BOS\)](#); [Chan, Connie \(BOS\)](#); [Dorsey, Matt \(BOS\)](#); danny.sauter@safgov.org; [Mandelman, Rafael \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: VOTE NO ON ORDINANCES 260603 & 260604
Date: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 9:09:56 AM

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Budget and Appropriations Committee

Board of Supervisors

City & County of San Francisco

Legislative Chamber, Room 250

City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place

San Francisco, California 94102 **THE BOS CAN SLEEP SOUNDLY KNOWING THAT**

JUNE 17

DEAR COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

I OPPOSE THE PASSAGE OF ORDINANCE(S) 260603 & 260604.

260603 AND 260604 SHOULD BE KILLED IN THE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE. THE PUBLIC NEEDS TIME TO DIGEST WHY THESE ITEMS HAVE BEEN FAST-TRACKED BEHIND THE PUBLIC'S BACK. THE SPEED OF THESE ITEMS' PASSAGE IS BREATHTAKING AND IRRESPONSIBLE. THE LACK OF PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY IS NOT GOOD GOVERNANCE.

AS THE COST OF BALLOT ARGUMENTS WILL BE INCREASED BY 400% , AVERAGE CITIZENS WILL BE FINANCIALLY FORCED TO STOP COMMENTING ON BALLOT ITEMS. THIS IS A BLATANT ATTEMPT TO FORCE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION OFF OF THE BALLOT. ONLY THE WEALTHY NEED APPLY.

FEW CITIZENS HAVE HEARD OF LEGISTAR OR BALLOTPEDIA. BY NOT PUBLISHING LEGAL TEXT MANY CITIZENS WILL NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY ARE VOTING FOR OR AGAINST IN GRANULAR DETAIL.

AS SF NOW HAS A “STRONG MAYOR” WHICH REMOVES CITIZEN’S PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT COMMITTEES COUPLED WITH THE PASSAGE OF THESE ORDINANCES, IT APPEARS THAT SF’S POLITICAL BUREAUCRACY IS TRYING TO LIMIT CITIZEN PARTICIPATION OF THE VERY PEOPLE THAT THEY ARE SUPPOSED TO REPRESENT.

PLEASE VOTE NO ON ORDINANCES 260603 & 260604

RESPECTFULLY,

**GEORGE WOODING
11 DELLBROOK AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO CA. 94131
415 695-1393**

GSWOODING@GMAIL.COM



Budget and Appropriations Committee
Board of Supervisors
City & County of San Francisco
Legislative Chamber, Room 250
City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, California 94102

Date: June 16, 2026

Re: Board File # [260603](#), Ordinance amending the Municipal Elections Code to increase the filing fee and per-word fee for paid ballot arguments; and Board File # [260604](#), Ordinance amending the Municipal Elections Code to remove the requirement that the Department of Elections publish the legal text of ballot measures in the Voter Information Pamphlet sent to voters before each election, and to allow the Director of Elections to determine the format of the Voter Information Pamphlet without the Ballot Simplification Committee's approval.

CSFN strongly opposes the passage of the two aforementioned ordinances, which appear in the hearing Agenda as items #6 and #7. The fee increases would result in a 400% increase over the next few years. If enacted it would make it harder for San Francisco residents to afford to submit ballot arguments. This isn't democratic – it makes it more expensive and will only benefit those with deep pockets.

I would expect this type of legislation from the Trump administration – they favor legislation making it harder for voter participation. We in San Francisco can and must do better. Keep the current prices for ballot arguments.

The second ordinance would "***remove the requirement that the Department of Elections publish the legal text of ballot measures in the Voter Information Pamphlet sent to voters before each election, [AND] allow the Director of Elections to determine the format of the Voter Information Pamphlet without the Ballot Simplification Committee's approval.***"

This second ordinance is also undemocratic. The Ballot Simplification Committee is vital. Voters read the voter information pamphlet and it must be written in understandable language.

My friend John Crabtree wrote the next paragraph in his letter. I couldn't have said it better so I'm ending with it.

I urge you to vote no on these two measures, stop the rush to judgement, stand up for democracy and the voices of the people who cannot so easily make their voices heard in the City's corridors of power. The Voter Information Pamphlet is not a revenue source, it is a sunk cost, a vitally important one. The cost that we pay to live in a democracy vs. the less obvious price that we will all pay when that democracy is gone. Democracy has a cost, but autocracy extracts a price too, a steep price.

Deborah Murphy
CSFN President
bridgelady@earthlink.net
(415) 672-1543

From: [Jean Barish](#)
To: [DorseyStaff \(BOS\)](#); [Waltonstaff \(BOS\)](#); [MandelmanStaff \(BOS\)](#); [Chan, Connie \(BOS\)](#); [SauterStaff](#)
Cc: [Jalipa, Brent \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Budget and Appropriations Committee July 17 Meeting - Agenda Items 6 & 7
Date: Tuesday, June 16, 2026 8:54:20 PM

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

I am writing in opposition to Items 6 and 7 on the June 17 Agenda of the Budget and Appropriations Committee.

Both measures are being rushed through the Board of Supervisors Budget and Appropriations Committee without adequate public review. Although the Mayor's Budget Director submitted both pieces of legislation on Monday June 1, it took two full work weeks until Friday June 12 before the public learned the legislation would be heard five days later on June 17.

Board File # 260603 will amend the Municipal Elections Code to increase the filing fee and per-word fee for paid ballot arguments. Board File #260604 will remove the requirement that the Department of Elections publish the legal text of ballot measures in the Voter Information Pamphlet sent to voters before each election and allow the Director of Elections to determine the format of the Voter Information Pamphlet without the Ballot Simplification Committee's approval.

Both these measures will weaken democratic elections in San Francisco, and will likely hand over even more power to special-interest recipient committees funded by billionaires to adversely influence San Francisco elections, further eroding the right of all voters to participate in our election process regardless of their economic status.

Please do not approve these unfair, anti-democratic Ordinances.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jean

Jean B Barish, Esq., MS, MA
jeanbbarish@hotmail.com

From: [John Crabtree](#)
To: [Jalipa, Brent \(BOS\)](#); [Chan, Connie \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Public Testimony on Board File #260603 & #260604
Date: Tuesday, June 16, 2026 5:28:41 PM

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Dear Clerk Jalipa and Chair Chan; embedded below please find my written testimony on Board File #260603 and #260604 for tomorrow's Board of Supervisors Budget and Appropriations Committee hearing. Please post these comments and public testimony in the "Public Correspondence" files for each agenda item and Board File mentioned herein, which includes Agenda item #6 (Board File #260603) and Agenda item #7 (Board File # 260604). Thank you,
John Crabtree, D4 resident (address and contact information at bottom of this public testimony document).

Budget and Appropriations Committee
Board of Supervisors
City & County of San Francisco
Legislative Chamber, Room 250
City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, California 94102

Date: June 17, 2026 (submitted June 16, 2026)

Re: Board File # [260603](#), Ordinance amending the Municipal Elections Code to increase the filing fee and per-word fee for paid ballot arguments; and Board File #[260604](#), Ordinance amending the Municipal Elections Code to remove the requirement that the Department of Elections publish the legal text of ballot measures in the Voter Information Pamphlet sent to voters before each election, and to allow the Director of Elections to determine the format of the Voter Information Pamphlet without the Ballot Simplification Committee's approval.

First and foremost, I oppose the passage of the two aforementioned ordinances, which appear in today's hearing Agenda as items #6 and #7, respectively.

The per-word ballot argument fee increase is neither small nor gradual. It is a 100% increase in the first year, which is then duplicated 3 more times over the "phase-in" for a total of a 400% increase.

Neither the BOS nor the DOE, nor, for that matter, the Mayor's office appears to have

considered any other potential cost savings or revenue enhancements, only a 400% increase in per-word filing fees.

The ballot argument filing (or submission) fee increase is also large (400%) and is not gradual either; again, a 100% increase in the first year repeated 3 more times on July 1st each of the next three consecutive years.

These are not small changes. The most recent paid ballot argument that I submitted (in opposition to Prop A, June 2026) cost \$548. My quick, back of the envelope calculation finds that the same ballot argument (with the same number of words) would eventually cost me \$2,740 under this proposal.

Even in the second year of the fee increases in this proposal, a similar ballot argument (with the same number of words, would cost \$1,096.

The second ordinance would ***"remove the requirement that the Department of Elections publish the legal text of ballot measures in the Voter Information Pamphlet sent to voters before each election, [AND] allow the Director of Elections to determine the format of the Voter Information Pamphlet without the Ballot Simplification Committee's approval."***

Perhaps the BOS needs to schedule a presentation on the anti-democratic limitations of substituting an online-only VIP for a printed VIP mailed to every voter. There are multiple experts that could provide such a presentation.

Does the Committee view the potential and eventual cost savings from "per-word filing fee increases" of \$300,000 as crucial to necessary overall savings in this budget process? Keeping in mind that the savings would be eventual and the savings would only be \$75K in the first year, which would actually be in next year's budget, meaning that there would be zero budgetary impact in this current budget round for this provision.

The second ordinance – Board File #260604 – would, by DOE estimate – which considering DOE's past history with financial estimates, is likely problematic – only generate \$66,000 in budgetary savings. Moreover, since DOE considers no additional printing and mailing costs for sending copies of legal text to voters that request them because they cannot access ballot measure legal text online; and since DOE estimates no other costs for the distribution of ballot measure legal text to voters requesting it, what reason is there to NOT assume that the budgetary savings number would be much lower than \$66,000? Or does the DOE intend to limit the number of people who can request a physical copy of legal text when they are unable to access it online?

I believe that the purpose of the Mayor's Office (and Department of Elections) in resurrecting

this proposal may very well have nothing to do with saving \$66,000 in this budget round, out of a global city budget of nearly \$16 billion Every journalist, analyst and investigator that has looked at this proposal, which I grant you is not many, has called out that it appears that the Mayor simply wants to soften the electoral ground in advance of his Charter "reform" and Commission "streamlining" efforts on the November ballot and to otherwise sweep away democratic processes and bar opposition voices from the ballot via sweeping autocratic legalism dressed up as budgetary "savings" and electoral "reforms."

When so many in City Hall are so busy exclaiming that we are in an "affordability crisis;" including the Mayor, how can you all turn around and show no concern for whether or not San Francisco residents can "afford" to participate in our democratic processes? Or have a voice on the ballot and the issues of the day?

It is two-faced to raise concern about "affordability" but price everyday San Francisco residents out of the democratic marketplace of ideas. It is the essence of hypocrisy.

I urge you to vote no on these two measures, stop the rush to judgement, stand up for democracy and the voices of the people who cannot so easily make their voices heard in the City's corridors of power. The Voter Information Pamphlet is not a revenue source, it is a sunk cost, a vitally important one. The cost that we pay to live in a democracy vs. the less obvious price that we will all pay when that democracy is gone. Democracy has a cost, but autocracy extracts a price too, a steep price.

John Crabtree
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