

FILE NO. 130413

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Municipal Elections Code - Publication of Legal Text of Proposed Measures]

Ordinance amending the Municipal Elections Code to specify that the Voter Information Pamphlet will include a portion of the legal text of any initiative ordinance, declaration of policy or bond measure that exceeds 100 pages.

Existing Law

The Municipal Elections Code requires the Department of Elections ("Department") to prepare a Voter Information Pamphlet ("VIP") in advance of every municipal election. The VIP includes information about candidates and ballot measures to be voted on at the election, as well as general election information. The Department provides the VIP to every registered San Francisco voter.

Section 500 of the Municipal Elections Code specifies the material that must be printed in the VIP. For each local ballot measure, the VIP must include the letter and title of the measure, the City Attorney's ballot question, the Ballot Simplification Committee's digest, the Controller's financial analysis, an explanation of how the measure qualified for submission to the voters, ballot arguments for and against the measure, and the full legal text of each measure.

Amendments to Current Law

This ordinance would amend Section 500 of the Municipal Elections Code to change the requirement that the VIP include the full legal text of every ballot measure. Under the proposed ordinance, the VIP would still include the full legal text of Charter amendments. For all other ballot measures, if the legal text of the measure is over 100 pages, the VIP would include only the first 20 pages of the legal text. In the event the full legal text of any measure is not included in the VIP, the Department would be required to post the legal text of that measure on its website, provide the legal text to the Main Library and every branch of the San Francisco public library, and mail a copy of the legal text to any voter upon request. The VIP would also include notices explaining to voters how to access the full legal text.

For any measure over 100 pages, the Board of Supervisors could adopt a resolution directing the Director of Elections to include the full legal text.

Additional Information

This legislative digest reflects amendments adopted by the Rules Committee at its special meeting on June 27, 2013.