

From: [Board of Supervisors, \(BOS\)](#)
To: [BOS Legislation, \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: FW: 9/29 BOS Meeting - Support Letter for Item 83 (File No. 201097)
Date: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 8:14:52 AM
Attachments: [Prop 17 Support Letter - SF Resolution.pdf](#)

From: Daisy Chavez <daisy@initiatejustice.org>

Sent: Monday, September 28, 2020 10:25 PM

To: Board of Supervisors, (BOS) <board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org>; Beinart, Amy (BOS) <amy.beinart@sfgov.org>; Fewer, Sandra (BOS) <sandra.fewer@sfgov.org>; Haney, Matt (BOS) <matt.haney@sfgov.org>; MandelmanStaff, [BOS] <mandelmanstaff@sfgov.org>; Mar, Gordon (BOS) <gordon.mar@sfgov.org>; Peskin, Aaron (BOS) <aaron.peskin@sfgov.org>; Preston, Dean (BOS) <dean.preston@sfgov.org>; Ronen, Hillary <hillary.ronen@sfgov.org>; Safai, Ahsha (BOS) <ahsha.safai@sfgov.org>; Stefani, Catherine (BOS) <catherine.stefani@sfgov.org>; Walton, Shamann (BOS) <shamann.walton@sfgov.org>; Yee, Norman (BOS) <norman.yee@sfgov.org>

Subject: 9/29 BOS Meeting - Support Letter for Item 83

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Hello,

Attached is our organization's letter of support for item #83 on tomorrow's agenda (Resolution in support of Prop 17).

Thank you,

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Daisy Chavez
Policy Associate
Initiate Justice
Pronouns: she/her/ella ([What does this mean?](#))
Cell: 714.273.1770

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"Building the power of currently incarcerated people, formerly incarcerated people, and their loved ones."

September 28, 2020

San Francisco Board of Supervisors
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
City Hall, Room 244
San Francisco, Ca. 94102-4689

RE: Support for Resolution in Support of Proposition 17, Restores Right to Vote After Completion of Prison Term

Dear San Francisco Board of Supervisors,,

On behalf of the Initiate Justice, I write in support of the resolution brought before you to support Proposition 17, which seeks to restore voting rights for 50,000 people who have completed their prison sentence in CA.

Initiate Justice fights to end mass incarceration by activating the political power of those directly impacted by it. We advocate for policy change by sponsoring legislation, campaigning for state ballot initiatives, and leading strategic campaigns to ensure policy implementation in line with our goals.

Felony disenfranchisement in the United States is part of a legacy of racially discriminatory Jim Crow laws that date back to the time of slavery and post-Civil War reconstruction. Our state, sadly, has its own role in this legacy. Not only did California refuse to ratify the 15th Amendment - which prohibits voting restrictions based on race - until 1962, but the Golden State even included permanent felony disenfranchisement in its first constitution in 1849. Because of racial disparities in our criminal legal system and the over-policing of communities of color, felony disenfranchisement continues to thwart the political power of Black and Brown Americans today. Three out of four men leaving California prisons are either African American, Latino, or Asian American.¹

Nationwide, more than 4.5 million people are barred from voting because of a felony conviction. Over 50,000 of these individuals are disenfranchised because they are currently on parole in California. At a time when our national democratic institutions are under threat, California has a responsibility to do more to prevent the silencing of formerly incarcerated people.

¹ CDCR Offender Data Points, December 2017.

Voting is a fundamental right of citizenship. Proposition 17 will amend the California Constitution to ensure that Californians who have completed their prison term can fully participate in our democracy.² Giving people returning home from prison access to civic participation is one of the most effective ways to assure their successful reintegration home. Blocking people who have completed their prison term from voting means our neighbors who are working, paying taxes, and raising families in this state are deprived of the ability to have a say in the policies and representatives who shape their daily lives. This is out of step with our values as Californians.

For these reasons, Initiate Justice urges the City of Berkeley to adopt this resolution. Please contact me at taina@initiatejustice.org with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Taina Vargas-Edmond
Executive Director, Co-Founder

cc: All Board members (Board.of.Supervisors@sfgov.org)
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² After AB 2466 (Weber, 2016) clarified that people in county jails or serving a period of Post-Release Community Supervision retain the right to vote, further re-enfranchisement of Californians with felony convictions requires amendment of the state constitution.