

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

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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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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

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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: [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: [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: [Board of Supervisors \(BOS\)](#)
To: [BOS-Supervisors](#); [BOS-Legislative Aides](#)
Cc: [BOS-Operations](#); [Jalipa, Brent \(BOS\)](#); [Calvillo, Angela \(BOS\)](#); [De Asis, Edward \(BOS\)](#); [Mchugh, Eileen \(BOS\)](#); [Ng, Wilson \(BOS\)](#); [Somera, Alisa \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: FW: Oppose Agenda Items #6 and #7 for 6/17/2026
Date: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 10:25:02 AM

Hello,

Please see below communications regarding **File Nos. 260603** and **260604**:

[File No. 260603](#): Municipal Elections Code - Ballot Argument Fees

[File No. 260604](#): Municipal Elections Code - Voter Information Pamphlets

Regards,

John Bullock
Office of the Clerk of the Board
San Francisco Board of Supervisors
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 554-5184
BOS@sfgov.org | www.sf.gov/sfbos

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From: todd greenberg <hedgewell@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 10:04 AM
To: Jalipa, Brent (BOS) <brent.jalipa@sfgov.org>
Cc: Chan, Connie (BOS) <connie.chan@sfgov.org>; Dorsey, Matt (BOS) <matt.dorsey@sfgov.org>; Sauter, Danny (BOS) <Danny.Sauter@sfgov.org>; Board of Supervisors (BOS) <board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org>
Subject: Oppose Agenda Items #6 and #7 for 6/17/2026

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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: [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

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

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							
	\$ 609,185	\$ 459,769	\$ 331,265	\$ 466,740	\$ 355,587	\$ 240,375	\$ 297,981
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.

June 16, 2026

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

Page 2

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?

June 16, 2026

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

Page 3

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. ”

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: [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

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

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

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

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							
	\$ 609,185	\$ 459,769	\$ 331,265	\$ 466,740	\$ 355,587	\$ 240,375	\$ 297,981
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.

June 16, 2026

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

Page 2

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?

June 16, 2026

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

Page 3

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: [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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