

BOARD of SUPERVISORS



City Hall
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Naomi Kelly, City Administrator

FROM: Victor Young, Assistant Clerk
Rules Committee

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Victor Young".

DATE: December 26, 2019

SUBJECT: LEGISLATION INTRODUCED

The Board of Supervisors' Rules Committee received the following proposed legislation on December 10, 2019:

File No. 191256

Ordinance amending the Administrative Code to name the rotunda on the second floor of City Hall in memory of former Deputy City Attorney Buck Delventhal.

If you have comments or reports to be included with the file, please forward them to me at the Board of Supervisors, City Hall, Room 244, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, San Francisco, CA 94102 or by email at: victor.young@sfgov.org.

c: Lynn Khaw, Office of the City Administrator
Lihmei Leu, Office of the City Administrator

1 [Administrative Code - Naming Second Floor Rotunda in City Hall for Buck Delventhal]

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3 **Ordinance amending the Administrative Code to name the rotunda on the second floor**
4 **of City Hall in memory of former Deputy City Attorney Buck Delventhal.**

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6 NOTE: **Unchanged Code text and uncodified text** are in plain Arial font.
7 **Additions to Codes** are in *single-underline italics Times New Roman font*.
8 **Deletions to Codes** are in ~~*strikethrough italics Times New Roman font*~~.
9 **Board amendment additions** are in double-underlined Arial font.
10 **Board amendment deletions** are in ~~Arial font~~.
11 **Asterisks (* * * *)** indicate the omission of unchanged Code
12 subsections or parts of tables.

13 Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

14 Section 1. Chapter 4 of the Administrative Code is hereby amended by adding Section
15 4.29, to read as follows:

16 **SEC 4.29. NAMING THE SECOND-FLOOR ROTUNDA IN CITY HALL FOR BUCK**
17 **DELVENTHAL.**

18 **(a) Findings.**

19 Burk E. Delventhal, known to all as Buck, joined the San Francisco City Attorney's Office as a
20 Deputy City Attorney in June 1970, and faithfully served the City and County of San Francisco in that
21 capacity for more than 49 years, until October 2019, when he retired due to a sudden illness and
22 tragically passed away shortly after. During his storied career, Buck served under four City Attorneys
23 and provided legal advice to 10 Mayors, 93 members of the Board of Supervisors, and countless other
24 City officers, employees, commissions, departments and City-related agencies.

25 Buck was a bastion of the City Attorney's Office and a central figure in City government for
nearly half a century – almost half the time City Hall itself has stood on this site. Buck, who was
regarded as the oracle of the City Charter, played a critical role in nearly every major legal issue to

1 face San Francisco during that time. Wrestling with the impacts of Proposition 13 on local
2 government, working through the complicated issues surrounding Supervisor Dan White's resignation
3 and the tragic assassinations of Mayor George Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk, aiding in the
4 desegregation of the Police and Fire Departments, drafting the City's domestic partnership ordinance
5 and helping shape the equal benefits ordinance, helping (twice) to keep the San Francisco Giants from
6 leaving town, advising on the legal issues involved in becoming a sanctuary city — Buck's deft legal
7 and personal touch steered all of these matters, and many more.

8 Buck's keen intellect, legal acumen, and encyclopedic knowledge of municipal law and state
9 and local history were complemented by a host of personal qualities that in part explained his
10 reputation as a legal lion in the public realm and his stature as the go-to lawyer for the City's toughest
11 legal questions. He was a beacon of integrity and honesty, with no personal agenda beyond his
12 commitment to principles of fair play and democratic self-governance and providing the best possible
13 objective legal advice, which has become a hallmark of the City Attorney's Office. His unassuming
14 grace, easy smile, eternal optimism, and boundless energy – along with his simple, bedrock humanity –
15 endeared him to his colleagues, his clients, and the public alike. He was beloved by many, and
16 respected by all.

17 Buck was the consummate teacher, willing to share his knowledge, experience, and insights at
18 every opportunity. As the City Attorney's Office's representative, he played a key role for many years
19 in the work of the City Attorneys Department of the League of California Cities, the County Counsels
20 Association and the International Municipal Lawyers Association, and was widely sought after and
21 recognized throughout California and the country for his expertise in municipal law. During his
22 decades of public service for the City, Buck was an inspiring and treasured mentor for generations of
23 lawyers in the City Attorney's Office, and for aspiring lawyers at the University of California Hastings
24 College of Law, where he was an adjunct professor for many years. In addition to his love of the law,
25 Buck was widely known for regaling colleagues, clients, and anyone else willing to listen with tales of

1 his City Hall experiences, arcane details about San Francisco history and its neighborhoods, book
2 recommendations on every imaginable topic, speaking many languages fluently, and, as a long-time
3 member of the South End Rowing Club, extolling the benefits of early morning Bay swimming and
4 luring as many colleagues as possible into the cold waters.

5 In 2013, the International Municipal Lawyers Association awarded Buck its highest honor, the
6 Charles S. Rhyne Lifetime Achievement Award. That same year, the California State Bar's Public Law
7 Section awarded Buck the Ronald M. George Public Lawyer of the Year Award, regarded as the
8 highest honor a governmental lawyer in California can receive. In 2000, and again in 2013, in
9 Resolution Nos. 560-00 and 407-13, the Board of Supervisors honored Buck's extraordinary
10 achievements and service to the City by designating a day as Buck Delventhal Day in San Francisco.

11 The rotunda on the second floor of City Hall is an appropriate location to honor Buck
12 Delventhal's legacy. The second-floor rotunda stands between the Board of Supervisors legislative
13 chamber and the Mayor's Office, symbolically bridging the two centers of power in City government,
14 and is often at the center of activity in City Hall, just as Buck so often was in his years of service to the
15 City.

16 **(b) Buck Delventhal Rotunda.**

17 The rotunda on the second floor of City Hall, between the elevator bank to the south, the
18 staircase to the east, the former telephone alcove to the north, and the Board of Supervisors legislative
19 chamber to the west, is named the Buck Delventhal Rotunda.

20 **(c) Signage.**

21 By no later than June 30, 2020, the City Administrator shall erect a plaque in or around the
22 Buck Delventhal Rotunda stating the name of the rotunda, with a brief description appropriately
23 recognizing Buck Delventhal's contributions to the City. The City Administrator shall have discretion
24 to determine the precise location of the plaque, and its size, design and content.

1 Section 2. Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective 30 days after
2 enactment. Enactment occurs when the Mayor signs the ordinance, the Mayor returns the
3 ordinance unsigned or does not sign the ordinance within ten days of receiving it, or the Board
4 of Supervisors overrides the Mayor's veto of the ordinance.

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6 APPROVED AS TO FORM:

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8 DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

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