



July 17, 2023

VIA EMAIL

The Honorable San Francisco  
Board of Supervisors  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
City Hall, Room 244  
San Francisco, CA 94102

John Arntz, Director  
San Francisco Department of Elections  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
City Hall, Room 48  
San Francisco, CA 94102

The Honorable London Breed  
Mayor of San Francisco  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
City Hall, Room 200  
San Francisco, CA 94102

David Chiu, City Attorney  
Office of the City Attorney  
City Hall, Room 234  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**RE: OPPOSE – Proposed ordinance File # 230663 Municipal Elections Code -  
Supporters and Opponents in Ballot Questions for Local Measures**

Dear Supervisors, Mayor Breed, Director Arntz, and Mr. Chiu,

**The League of Women Voters of San Francisco writes to strongly oppose the ordinance that would amend the Municipal Elections Code to opt out of state law that would require a short list of supporters and opponents of each local ballot measure to be shown on the ballot (File # 230663) being considered by the Board of Supervisors at its meeting on July 18, 2023.**

The League supports an informed, active electorate, and we believe that voters should be provided with relevant, accurate, and easily understandable information about elections. The League strongly supported the [2021-2022 State Assembly Bill 1416 \(AB 1416\)](#)<sup>1</sup> to give more information directly to voters and empower them to make better informed choices. AB 1416 was passed into law as [Section 9170 of the California Elections Code](#)<sup>2</sup>.

Educated and informed voters are the key to our democracy. A list of support and opposition on the ballot will provide San Francisco voters with accessible and concise, yet salient information that can help them make more informed decisions.

**Empowering voters. Defending democracy.**

League of Women Voters of San Francisco

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Research shows that Californians support increased transparency on ballots. A [poll by the nonpartisan Clean Money Campaign](#)<sup>3</sup> before the November 2020 election found 79% of California voters want to know who supports and opposes ballot measures, but they're not confident they know this information or can find it easily. The poll also showed 75% of those voters favor adding a short list of supporters and opponents of each measure on the ballot itself – precisely what Section 9170 of the California Elections Code addresses.

While we appreciate that support and opposition is listed in the San Francisco Voter Information Pamphlet, that is an extremely long document, making it difficult for San Francisco voters to find the support and opposition information they want to know. As a recent example, in an [interview with ABC7 News](#)<sup>4</sup>, Director Arntz described the November 2022 Voter Information Pamphlet as “rather large, it’s over 250 pages which is one of the biggest, most pages we’ve had for a pamphlet in the city’s history.”

By listing support and opposition on the ballot, critical information about who is behind a ballot measure will be readily available on the ballot itself.

For these reasons and more, **the League strongly opposes San Francisco permanently opting out of Section 9170 of the California Elections Code.**

Thank you for your public service, hearing our concerns, and the opportunity to speak about ways to ensure that San Franciscans have the information and confidence they need to participate in our democracy.

We’re available to speak with you about these issues. Please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



Alison Goh  
President  
League of Women Voters of San Francisco  
[president@lwvsf.org](mailto:president@lwvsf.org)

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

<sup>1</sup> [https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=202120220AB1416](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB1416)

<sup>2</sup> [https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes\\_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=ELEC&sectionNum=9170](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=ELEC&sectionNum=9170).

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.yesfairelections.org/content/pdf/ccmc\\_ab1416\\_twopager.pdf](https://www.yesfairelections.org/content/pdf/ccmc_ab1416_twopager.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://abc7news.com/2022-midterm-election-san-francisco-early-voting-center-open/12315511/>