



## Memorandum

**To: Honorable Edwin M. Lee, Mayor  
Honorable Members, Board of Supervisors**

**From: John Arntz, Director of Elections**

**Date: March 10, 2011**

**RE: Notice of Ballot Simplification Committee Meetings for a potential June 7, 2011,  
Consolidated Special Election**

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The Ballot Simplification Committee works in public meetings to prepare a fair and impartial summary of each local ballot measure in simple language. These summaries, or “digests,” are printed in San Francisco’s Voter Information Pamphlet, which is mailed to every registered voter before each election.

The uncertainty of whether the Governor will call a special statewide election for June 7 has affected planning for Ballot Simplification Committee meetings. Normally, the Committee completes digests no later than 85 days before an election, which would be March 14 for a June 7 election. Although an election has not yet been called, the Committee is scheduled to meet on Monday, March 21, to draft digests for local measures that would appear on the ballot if a June 7 election is called; the Committee is also scheduled to meet on Tuesday, March 22, to review any Requests for Reconsideration of digests drafted the previous day. If, prior to the meeting dates, it is clear that there will not be a June statewide special election, the Ballot Simplification Committee meetings will be cancelled.

Meeting agendas and other materials will be posted on the Department of Elections website, [www.sfelections.org/bsc](http://www.sfelections.org/bsc), and in our office in City Hall, Room 48. Agendas will be posted at least 72 hours prior to the meeting, as mandated by the Sunshine Ordinance. Other meeting materials will be made available as early as possible. Please check often for any updates.

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### **About the Ballot Simplification Committee**

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Each digest must explain the primary purposes and points of the measure, but is not required to include auxiliary or subsidiary information. Each digest must include the following four sections:

- *The Way It Is Now*
- *The Proposal*
- *A "Yes" Vote Means*
- *A "No" Vote Means*

In general, each digest is limited to 300 words. Digests may exceed the 300-word limit if the Committee determines that the complexity or scope of the proposed measure requires a longer digest. In addition, digests must be written as close as possible to the eighth-grade reading level.

The Ballot Simplification Committee also assists the Department of Elections in preparing other informational material for the Voter Information Pamphlet, such as a glossary of the terms that appear in the pamphlet.

For more information about the Ballot Simplification Committee, please visit [www.sfelections.org/bsc](http://www.sfelections.org/bsc) or the Department of Elections office in City Hall, Room 48.