

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST
(Second Draft, dated 6/13/2008)

[Number of signatures required to qualify a recall petition.]

A proposal to amend the Charter of the City and County of San Francisco at an election to be held on November 4, 2008 by amending Section 14.103, to adopt State law regarding the number of signatures required to qualify a recall petition for local officers.

Existing Law

Under the Charter, elected City officials, including members of the Board of Supervisors, and members of certain boards and commissions may be recalled by the voters. A recall petition must include the signatures of at least ten percent of the registered voters in the City. For a member of the Board of Supervisors, the petition must include the signatures of at least ten percent of the registered voters in the supervisor's district.

Amendments to Current Law

The proposal would amend the Charter to delete specific provisions regarding the number of signatures needed to qualify a recall petition and adopt the signature requirements set by State law.

Background Information

State law provides a sliding scale of signature requirements for recall petitions, based on the number of registered voters in the jurisdiction, as follows:

- Thirty percent if the registration is less than 1,000;
- Twenty-five percent if the registration is less than 10,000 but at least 1,000;
- Twenty percent if the registration is less than 50,000 but at least 10,000;
- Fifteen percent if the registration is less than 100,000 but at least 50,000; and,

- Ten percent if the registration is 100,000 or above.

(Cal. Elections Code sec. 11221.)

The total number of registered voters in the City, as of May 5, 2008, was 425,162. Under State law, a recall petition for a Citywide office would require signatures of 10 percent of the registered voters in the City.

The number of registered voters in each of the City's eleven supervisorial districts, as of May 5, 2008, ranged from 32,659 to 50,428, with an average of 38,651. Under City law, a recall petition for a member of the Board of Supervisors would require signatures of 20 percent of the registered voters in the district, or 15 percent in a district with at least 50,000 registered voters.

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The First Draft of this amendment, dated 5/13/2008, would have specifically raised the number of signatures required for a recall petition for a member of the Board of Supervisors from 10 percent of the registered voters in the district to 20 percent.