

Member, Board of Supervisors
District 9



City and County of San Francisco

DAVID CAMPOS

August 10, 2016

Chair Betty Packard and Members of the Ballot Simplification Committee
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
City Hall, Room 48
San Francisco, CA 94102

Via email to: publications@sfgov.org

Re: Public Advocate – Request for Reconsideration of Approved Digest

Dear Chair Packard and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for your work on the Ballot Digest for the Public Advocate Charter Amendment. I ask for Reconsideration of the Approved Digest to suggest the following edits **in bold**:

Suggested edit #1

The Way It Is Now: The City currently does not have a particular official or central office responsible for overseeing how City departments interact with the public. **A number of Some City agencies offices** provide opportunities for the public to obtain information, report problems or submit service requests.

Rationale: Since only some City offices provide a mechanism for the public to contact them and obtain information, report problems, or submit services requests it is more accurate to state it as "some." The examples listed below are not all "agencies" or "departments" and would be more accurately characterized in one word as "offices."

Suggested edit #2

Some examples include:

- ~~the City's 311 Customer Service Line;~~
- ~~all 11 the Board of Supervisors' offices (each of which employs three aides to provide constituent services);~~
- ~~the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services;~~
- ~~the City Attorney's Office;~~
- the Controller; and
- the Office of Citizen Complaints (for complaints about police actions).

Rationale: It is not accurate to state that each of the Board of Supervisors offices' has three aides all of whom are employed only to provide constituent services. Some Board of Supervisors aides are dedicated primarily to constituent services while others are dedicated to policymaking and legislation. In addition, it is confusing to have an extra parenthetical after the Board of Supervisors describing how many staff the office has but not to have the same parenthetical after every other office listed below it. Instead of doing that for each office, my suggestion would be to delete the parenthetical after the Board of Supervisors. I would also suggest deleting the City Attorney's Office from this list since to include it without also including other City elective offices such as the District Attorney, Treasurer, Assessor, Board of Education, Community College Board gives a misleading impression to the reader that the City Attorney's offices is implicated by this measure any more than other city elective offices.

Suggested edit #3

The Controller is the City's chief accounting officer and auditor. ~~The Controller monitors the level and effectiveness of City services.~~ The Controller also oversees the City's whistleblower program, which receives and investigates confidential complaints regarding misuse of City funds and improper activities by City officers and employees.

Rationale: Since the job of "auditor" is already mentioned in the first sentence as a duty of the Controller, the second sentence is redundant. If the Committee wishes to explain the full job duties of the Controller, I would suggest doing so in the "Words You Need to Know" section.

Suggested edit #4

(At the bottom of "The Proposal" Section)

Proposition __ would also **provide for 3 staff members for the Public Advocate and make it non-binding** City policy to provide the Public Advocate with ~~a support staff of at least 25 people.~~ **11 staff members to perform constituent services and 11 staff members to perform investigations.**

Rationale: The legal text of the Charter Amendment only requires that there shall be 3 staff members - a Chief Deputy Public Advocate and two Assistant Public Advocates. Beyond that, there is only a non-binding Declaration of Policy policy that recommends sufficient funding for the office to perform its functions be provided and gives examples of what that staffing could be. It is important to let voters know this statement of city policy is non-binding as previous Ballot Digests in prior years have done when describing Declarations of Policy as non-binding.

Suggested edit #5

A "YES" Vote Means: If you vote "yes," you want to amend the Charter to create the position of Public Advocate, responsible for investigating and attempting to resolve public complaints concerning City services and programs, **and to make it non-binding city policy to provide sufficient funding and administrative support for the Office of**

Public Advocate to perform these functions. You also want to make it City policy to provide the Public Advocate with a support staff of at least 25 people.

Rationale: This is a more concise description for the Yes Vote means section that summarizes but does not simply repeat what was stated above regarding the duties and function the office.

Making these changes will better inform voters as to the nature and impact of the measure. I would appreciate your consideration of these suggestions during your discussions.

Thank you very much for your dedicated service to the people of San Francisco.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Campos". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a prominent initial "D".

Supervisor David Campos