

August 8, 2016

Members, Ballot Simplification Committee
Department of Elections
City and County of San Francisco
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 48
San Francisco, CA 94102

VIA PDF E-MAIL

**Re: Comments on Draft Digest for “Public Advocate” Charter
Amendment**

Dear Members of the Ballot Simplification Committee:

We have had the opportunity to review the draft digest prepared for your consideration at tomorrow’s meeting for the “Public Advocate” charter amendment. We respectfully request that you consider the following changes to the digest (**changes reflected in red**).

1. “The Way It Is Now,” new paragraph at the end.
(Additions in underline)

A number of other agencies throughout San Francisco government also provide opportunities for the public to obtain information, report problems, or submit service requests. Some examples include:

- the Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Services;
- the City Attorney’s office; and
- all eleven Supervisors’ offices, which each employ three aides to provide constituent services.

Rationale: As drafted, the Digest gives an inaccurate picture of citizens’ opportunities to engage with their City government. Those opportunities are far more widespread and varied than indicated. We believe voters should be given a better idea of “the way it *really* is now.” In particular, we think it is important to note that constituent service is a key part of the Supervisors’ own role. See the attached

[CES6186.15]

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announcement issued by the Department of Human Resources in 2012, when the City appropriated funds to increase each Supervisors' staff from two to three, which notes the substantial constituent service dues that go with the position.

2. "The Proposal," two new paragraphs at the end.
(Additions in underline)

Proposition ___ would also create an "Office of the Public Advocate." That Office must hire at a minimum of 25 staff, including:

- a Chief Deputy Public Advocate and at least two Assistant Public Advocates, all three of whom are exempt from civil service requirements;
- at least eleven staff members to perform constituent services; and
- at least eleven staff members to perform investigations.

Proposition ___ would allow the Public Advocate to hire outside experts, without requiring that he or she comply with most rules governing City contracts.

Rationale: Regarding the first paragraph and bullet points, the current draft of the Digest gives the misleading impression that the "Public Advocate" will be a man or woman in an office somewhere, when the reality is that this charter amendment establishes a significant new public agency, with minimum staffing levels. Voters deserve to be informed of this fact. In fact, the legislative digest that the Supervisors considered in deciding whether to submit this measure to the voters regarded this as an important enough point to include it.

Regarding the second paragraph, the measure (page 6, lines 7-16) instructs the Public Advocate to make a "good faith effort" to comply with City contracting rules regarding such things as human rights, nondiscrimination, minority/women/local business utilization,

living wage, etc. But the only two requirements that he or she is compelled to follow are those found in Charter sections 6.102 (must be approved as to form by the City Attorney) and 9.118 (contracts exceeding ten years and/or \$10 million must be approved by the Board of Supervisors). Again, this is a significant change from current law that voters should be apprised of.

3. **“A ‘YES’ Vote Means,” new paragraph at the end.**
(Additions in underline)

You also want to establish a new “Office of the Public Advocate,” with at least 25 new staff plus the ability to hire outside consultants without requiring that the Public Advocate comply with most rules governing City contracts.

Rationale: This change tracks the suggestions in points #1 and #2 above, and would make the “Yes Vote” section consistent with “The Proposal.”

* * * * *

We look forward to discussing these comments with you at T’s meeting.

Sincerely,



Christopher E. Skinnell

Legislative Assistant

Recruitment #PEX-1835-900BOS

Department Board Of Supervisors

Analyst Christine Cayabyab

Date Opened 8/30/2012 8:00:00 AM

Filing Deadline Continuous

Salary \$37.46 - \$45.54/hour; \$6,494.00 - \$7,893.00/month;
\$77,922.00 - \$94,718.00/year

Job Type None - NON-PUBLIC

Employment Type Full-Time

INTRODUCTION

DESCRIPTION:

The San Francisco Board of Supervisors seeks legislative aides to perform a wide variety of legislative, constituent and administrative duties. Each Supervisor may employ up to three full-time Legislative Aides. Office staff is supplemented with volunteers and interns, who are managed by the Legislative Aides.

- Represents or accompanies the Supervisor at governmental, neighborhood, community, social or business functions and meetings
- Serves as a liaison to constituents, Supervisorial offices, city departments, local, state and federal governmental agencies, neighborhood associations, media and community, political, nonprofit and private sector organizations
- Carries out, interprets and explains existing policies, methods and procedures relative to the activities and operations of the Board and its committees
- Conducts research on a variety of subjects and policy issues
- Prepares resolutions, ordinances, reports, speeches, memoranda and correspondence
- Manages office and volunteers

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE JOB:

The work environment is fast-paced and dynamic, and the Legislative Aide job covers a broad range of skill sets and issue areas, including but not limited to:

Legislative

- Advise the Supervisor on political and policy issues before the Board of Supervisors
- Work with the Supervisor, other elected officials, the City Attorney's Office, City Departments, advocates and interest groups to draft and pass legislation

Constituent

- Connect residents and merchants with relevant resources and mediate neighborhood conflicts
- Represent the Supervisor at community meetings and events

Administrative

- Screen and respond to calls, emails and inquiries, prepare correspondence, monitor meetings
- Manage scheduling and office administration Manage team of policy and administrative volunteers

APPOINTMENT TYPE:

Permanent Exempt: The Legislative Aide position is exempt from Civil Service Rules and serves at the pleasure of the appointing body.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Bachelor of Arts degree or significant commensurate work experience
- Minimum of two years professional experience
- Smart, motivated, articulate, diplomatic, politically savvy
- High-level interpersonal skills to communicate effectively with a wide range of people including constituents, community activists, city staff and press.
- Strong public speaking ability Volunteer or team management skills to create high performing, professional, inviting office environment Well-organized, detail-oriented, and available to work flexible hours
- Excellent writing skills

HIGHLY DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS:

- Knowledgeable about San Francisco—issues, people, politics, places
- Experience working in local government Graduate degree in public policy, law, business or related field

HOW TO APPLY

Interested applicants are encouraged to **FILE IMMEDIATELY**. This recruitment will remain open until the position is filled and may close at any time.

DISASTER SERVICE WORKERS

All City and County of San Francisco employees are designated Disaster Service Workers through state and local law (California Government Code Section 3100-3109). Employment with the City requires the affirmation of a loyalty oath to this effect. Employees are required to complete all Disaster Service Worker-related training as assigned, and to return to work as ordered in the event of an emergency.

BENEFITS

All employees hired on or after January 10, 2009 will be required (pursuant to San Francisco Charter Section A8.432) to contribute 2% of pre-tax compensation to fund retiree healthcare. In addition, most employees are required to make a member contribution towards retirement, typically a 7.5% of compensation. For more information on these provisions, please contact the personnel office of the hiring agency.

For more information about benefits, please [click here](#).

Click on a link below to apply for this position:

Fill out the Application NOW using the Internet.

