

City and County of
San Francisco



Board of Supervisors,
President

AARON PESKIN
市參事 佩斯金

July 24, 2024

Ballot Simplification Committee
c/o Karlie O'Toole, Elections Division Manager
City Hall, Room 48
Via e-mail BSC.Clerk@sfgov.org

Dear Chair Packard and Members of the Ballot Simplification Committee,

Thank you for taking up the work to translate this measure to the electorate. As the Chief sponsor and author, I ask your consideration of some suggested changes to the Commissions Streamlining Charter Amendment Ballot Digest.

As the measure addresses changes to San Francisco's commissions and advisory bodies, I believe it is important to communicate to voters in a neutral tone the manner in which commissions *currently* function in the City Charter. The San Francisco Civil Grand Jury recently studied this topic, including interviewing over 100 individuals familiar with our commission system, and issued an official report, which is cited in the establishing language of the Charter Amendment Ordinance.

They outlined six essential functions of commissions: providing checks and balances, providing citizen engagement, fostering transparency, promoting accountability, providing oversight and contributing expertise.

I would ask you to consider the following change to the first sentence of "the way it is now":

The Way It Is Now: The City currently has a total of about 130 boards, commissions and advisory bodies ("commissions") ~~that make policy or other decision for the City or provide non-binding advice to City officials and departments.~~ These commissions gather public comment, allow citizen engagement and make recommendations for improving City services. Many also provide oversight for city agencies by approving budgets and contracts and establishing policies for how these services should be delivered.

Additionally, I would respectfully suggest that the "Yes vote means" section, could be more concise than it is currently written. I would ask you to consider the following change:

A "YES" Vote Means: If you vote "yes," you want to create a Task Force ~~with authority to make recommendations~~ to recommend by February 1, 2026 ~~on ways the City could change, eliminate or combine commissions to improve the administration of City government~~ and make it less costly; ~~require the Budget and Legislative Analyst to prepare a financial report on the City's commissions; and give the Task Force authority to introduce ordinances to implement~~ enable the Task Force to introduce legislation

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implementing its recommendations and, if required, provide for the City Attorney to draft any Charter amendment to submit to the voters at a future election to implement its other recommendations.

Thank you, as always, for the opportunity to participate in the important process of making sure the voters receive clear and accurate information about the Commissions Streamlining Charter Amendment. I look forward to discussing these changes with you at the Commission on Thursday, or if need be, will send my Chief of Staff, Sunny Angulo.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Aaron Peskin".

Aaron