

**Subject:** Request for Reconsideration of Approved Digest “Creating a Task Force to Recommend Changing, Eliminating, or Combining City Commissions”

On behalf of TogetherSF Action, we thank you for volunteering your time and expertise for drafting an easy-to-understand digest on the following charter amendment.

We respectfully request your consideration of some key points as you make final recommendations to the language that will be presented to voters in November:

### **Remove “Improve the Administration of City Government”**

Remove the phrase “...for the improved administration of City government.” and “to improve the administration of City government” from both “**The Proposal**” and “**A "YES" Vote Means:**” sections

#### **Rationale for Amendment**

The phrases “for the improved administration of City government” and “to improve the administration of City government” are biased and aspirational statements that relay the goal of the measure, but have no bearing on what the actual consequences of the measure will be, which cannot be known until the measure is passed.

While the measure’s text states that the task force is created for “...*the more effective, efficient, and economical administration of City and County government...*” that in itself is just an aspirational statement that the measure hopes but has no actual guarantee of achieving.

Additionally, the phrase from the legislation text + the digest phrases “...for the improved administration of City government” and “to improve the administration of City government” are subjective. Specifically, “more effective,” “more efficient” could look like different things to different people.

- For example, some people may actually think more commissions with more powers would create a more effective government because they believe more commissions would lead to more oversight over City departments and thus more accountability for departments and their better functioning. However, this measure purports to as Supervisor Peskin himself highlighted in his correspondence to “*eliminate, consolidate, or limit the the powers and duties of appointive boards and commissions..*”
- “More efficient” is also subjective. Some may argue that having more specialized commissions instead of fewer/consolidated commissions with more generalized functions would actually be more efficient since the individual specialized commissions could do their functions faster/more expertly than a larger more generalized function commission i.e a specialization of labor

For similar reasons from above, the use of “for improved administration of City government” and “to improve the administration of City government” are subjective. **“Improved administration” and “to improve” could look different to different groups of people.**

- Some people may believe that more, and not fewer, commissions would lead to “improved” administration of the City because more commissions would lead to more oversight in their minds and therefore in their minds more accountability and better functioning for departments.
- Likewise, some people might believe more specialized commissions would improve and enable City administration to perform better than fewer, consolidated commissions with generalized functions.
- Some people also might think our current commission system is fine and don’t believe streamlining commissions will “improve” City Administration.” In fact they might believe reducing # of commissions would worsen City Administration.

Finally, just because a statement is made in legislative text does not mean it is not a biased and aspirational statement i.e. a statement in a legislative text can be aspirational.

For example, in the legislative text for 2014 Prop C in [Sec. 16.127-1 section \(e\)](#), there is the aspirational statement *“The Our Children, Our Families Council, comprised of department heads from the City and SFUSD, and community stakeholders, will build a platform that will place children and families at the center of every policy decision.”*

The above statement was an aspiration of the legislation but not necessarily its actual result - in fact, there is a [recent charter amendment](#) updating the Our Children, Our Families Council to help it better achieve its stated purpose.

To recap then, we respectfully request the removal of the phrase “for the improved administration of City government” because:

- It’s an aspirational and positively biased statement when the draft digest should be neutral and unbiased
  - The statement gives off a misleading impression to readers that measure will lead to “improved administration of City government”
- “Improved” is a subjective term and many different people could reasonably have a different interpretation of what “improved” City administration would look like
- A statement being derived from legislative text does not mean that statement is non-aspirational and unbiased. It would make sense that language from a legislative text would try to portray the legislative text it comes from in the best possible light.

We respectfully request the following amendments:

**Requested Amendment**

In **“The Proposal”** section:

“Proposition \_\_ is a Charter amendment that would create a Commission Streamlining Task Force (Task Force) to review the structure of the City’s commissions and recommend to the Mayor and the Board by February 1, 2026, how the City could change, eliminate or consolidate commissions. ~~for the improved administration of City government.”~~”

In the **“A “YES” Vote Means:”** section:

“If you vote “yes,” you want to create a Task Force with authority to make recommendations by February 1, 2026, on ways the City could change, eliminate or consolidate commissions ~~to improve the administration of City government~~; require a financial report on the City’s commissions; and give the Task Force authority to introduce ordinances to implement its recommendations, and if necessary, require the City Attorney to draft Charter amendments to submit to voters at a future election.”

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Kanishka Cheng  
CEO, TogetherSF Action