



Budget and Appropriations Committee  
Board of Supervisors  
City & County of San Francisco  
Legislative Chamber, Room 250  
City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, California 94102

Date: June 16, 2026

Re: Board File # [260603](#), Ordinance amending the Municipal Elections Code to increase the filing fee and per-word fee for paid ballot arguments; and Board File # [260604](#), Ordinance amending the Municipal Elections Code to remove the requirement that the Department of Elections publish the legal text of ballot measures in the Voter Information Pamphlet sent to voters before each election, and to allow the Director of Elections to determine the format of the Voter Information Pamphlet without the Ballot Simplification Committee's approval.

CSFN strongly opposes the passage of the two aforementioned ordinances, which appear in the hearing Agenda as items #6 and #7. The fee increases would result in a 400% increase over the next few years. If enacted it would make it harder for San Francisco residents to afford to submit ballot arguments. This isn't democratic – it makes it more expensive and will only benefit those with deep pockets.

I would expect this type of legislation from the Trump administration – they favor legislation making it harder for voter participation. We in San Francisco can and must do better. Keep the current prices for ballot arguments.

The second ordinance would "*remove the requirement that the Department of Elections publish the legal text of ballot measures in the Voter Information Pamphlet sent to voters before each election, [AND] allow the Director of Elections to determine the format of the Voter Information Pamphlet without the Ballot Simplification Committee's approval.*"

This second ordinance is also undemocratic. The Ballot Simplification Committee is vital. Voters read the voter information pamphlet and it must be written in understandable language.

My friend John Crabtree wrote the next paragraph in his letter. I couldn't have said it better so I'm ending with it.

I urge you to vote no on these two measures, stop the rush to judgement, stand up for democracy and the voices of the people who cannot so easily make their voices heard in the City's corridors of power. The Voter Information Pamphlet is not a revenue source, it is a sunk cost, a vitally important one. The cost that we pay to live in a democracy vs. the less obvious price that we will all pay when that democracy is gone. Democracy has a cost, but autocracy extracts a price too, a steep price.

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