SAN FRANCISCO
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2010 MAR 1 PM 5:00
DEPARTMENT OF ELECTIONS

INITIATIVE MEASURE TO BE SUBMITTED DIRECTLY TO THE VOTERS

The People of the City and County of San Francisco do hereby ordain as follows:

SECTION 1.

This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Saturday Voting Act" (the "Act").

SECTION 2.

The San Francisco Municipal Elections Code is hereby amended to add a new Article VII which will read as follows:

Article VII: SATURDAY VOTING ACT

SECTION 700. PURPOSE AND INTENT.

(a) San Francisco residents deserve a voting system which corresponds to the schedules and lifestyles of working families. Allowing voting on Saturday would encourage parents to involve their children in the democratic process and help teach children the importance of civic engagement at an early age.

(b) San Francisco residents deserve an election schedule based on current housing and workplace patterns, transportation networks, and technological developments. When American civic leaders first decided over 150 years ago that elections should be held on a Tuesday, Americans lived in an agrarian society and most voters had to travel a great distance to the polls.

(c) The United States is ranked 132nd out of 179 developed nations in voter turnout. In the 2008 Presidential election, the United States had its largest turnout in over 50 years, yet only 60 percent of eligible voters participated. Despite San Francisco's politically-involved and educated population, voter turnout averages approximately 46 percent, and some recent elections have seen turnout as low as 23 percent. Citizens have indicated that scheduling of the election is a major barrier to voting.

(d) A national grassroots movement called "Why Tuesday?" has proposed moving election day from Tuesday to the weekend, and has introduced legislation to implement this change to Congress several times over the past decade, though this legislation has not yet been put up for a legislative vote.

(e) This initiative would create a pilot program in connection with the November 2011 General Municipal Election in the City and County of San Francisco which would require the Department of Elections to open satellite locations for early voting at each of the approximately 400 polling places throughout the City and County on the Saturday prior to the Tuesday election.

(f) This pilot program would use the same safeguards and voting system applied to Tuesday voting in order to have the Saturday voting experience replicate the voting experience currently in place.

(g) The pilot program would be at no cost to the taxpayers. The initiative creates a "Saturday Voting Fund" to accept donations to cover the cost of operating the satellite voting locations, all of which would be publicly disclosed on the Department of Elections' website. The pilot program would not be required if the Saturday Voting Fund does not raise the sufficient funds to cover the costs of operating the satellite voting locations.

(h) The purposes and intent of this initiative are: to increase voter turnout at elections held in the City and County; to make voting more accessible for today's working families; to provide a voting system that encourages parents to involve their children in the democratic process; to teach the importance of civic engagement at an early age; to increase access to the polls on a day when the majority of residents are not working; to serve as an example to the rest of the country that offering Saturday voting increases voter turnout; and to study the efficacy of continued Saturday voting.

SECTION 701. OPERATION OF SATELLITE VOTING LOCATIONS.

(a) On the Saturday before the November 8, 2011 General Municipal Election, the Department of Elections shall operate a satellite location for early voting, as authorized by California Elections Code section 3018, at each polling place which will be utilized for election day voting on November 8, 2011.

(b) The Department of Elections will not be required to operate satellite locations for early voting at each polling place which will be utilized for election day voting on November 8, 2011, if the Saturday Voting Fund does not contain sufficient funds to cover the costs of operating the satellite locations. The determination regarding whether the Saturday Voting Fund contains sufficient funds to cover the costs of operating the satellite locations will be made by the Controller.

SECTION 702. SATURDAY VOTING AT FUTURE ELECTIONS.

(a) The Department of Elections shall prepare a study of the efficacy of Saturday voting, including the effect on voter turnout, impact on working families, and educational benefits, to be completed no later than February 1, 2012.

(b) If this study shows that Saturday voting could further the intent and purposes of the Act, then the voters urge the Department of Elections, Elections Commission, Mayor, and Board of Supervisors to take all necessary steps to develop and fund Saturday voting for future elections in the City and County of San Francisco.

SECTION 3.

The San Francisco Administrative Code is hereby amended to add a new Section 10-100.371 which will read as follows:

SECTION 10.100-371. ESTABLISHMENT OF SATURDAY VOTING FUND.

(a) **Establishment of Fund**. The Saturday Voting Fund is established as a category eight fund into which shall be deposited all donations, grants, gifts, and bequests for the purpose of operating satellite locations for early voting at polling places in the November 8, 2011 election. The acceptance of any gift of cash or goods into this fund shall not be subject to the approval process required by section 10.100-305.

(b) **Use of Fund**. The monies received into the Saturday Voting Fund are hereby appropriated exclusively to pay the necessary expenses that the Department of Elections incurs in connection with the operation of the satellite locations for early voting at each polling place for the November 8, 2011 election as required by Municipal Elections Code section 701. Any monies remaining in the Fund after paying these necessary expenses shall be used exclusively to develop and fund Saturday voting for future elections.

(c) **Administration of Fund**. The Director of the Department of Elections shall submit a written report of all receipts and expenditures of the Saturday Voting Fund to the Department of Elections, Elections Commission, the Mayor, the Controller, and the Board of Supervisors by February 1, 2012.

(d) **Transparency**. The Department of Elections shall post the names of all donors and donation amounts to the Saturday Voting Fund on its website within 15 days of receipt.

SECTION 4.

This Act shall be interpreted so as to be consistent with all federal and state laws, rules, and regulations. If any section, sub-section, sentence, or clause ("portion") of this Act is held to be invalid or unconstitutional by a final judgment of a court, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Act. The voters hereby declare that this Act, and each portion, would have been adopted irrespective of the fact that any one or more portions of the Act are found invalid. If any portion of this Act is held invalid as applied to any person or circumstance, such invalidity shall not affect any application of this Act which can be given effect.

This Act shall be broadly construed to achieve the purposes stated in this Act. It is the intent of the voters that the provisions of this Act be interpreted or implemented by the City and County, courts, and others in a manner that facilitates the purposes set forth herein.

SECTION 5.

This Act shall become effective upon approval by the voters of the City and County of San Francisco.

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