

August 9, 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: Response to Anticipated Request for Reconsideration of  
Draft Digest for “Housing and Development Commission”  
Charter Amendment**

Dear Members of the Ballot Simplification Committee:

Thank you for your time and pain-staking consideration in approving the digest for the “Housing and Development Commission” charter amendment at your August 8th meeting. We recognize that this is a complicated measure, and not an easy one to summarize for lay voters, much less at an 8th grade level.

Though the Committee did not accept all of our proposed changes, we recognize the care and thoughtfulness that you applied to revising the digest, and believe that the end result was a fair attempt to neutrally and accurately describe a complex subject. ***Accordingly, we support the Committee’s approved digest for the Initiative and do not request any changes.***

My purpose in writing this letter is to preemptively address an anticipated request for reconsideration by Supervisors Peskin’s office. Supervisor Peskin submitted written comments in connection with the August 8 hearing, and his legislative aide, Sunny Angulo, spoke at length at the hearing itself. The Committee reasonably attempted to take their comments into account where appropriate, but the simple fact is that the changes they have requested are blatant attempts to bias the language of the digest, which must be neutral, by injecting material that is more appropriate to a ballot argument in favor of the measure. And, of course some of the proposed changes—like the proposals in Mr. Peskin’s initial

[CES6186.14]

**SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA**

2350 KERNER BLVD, SUITE 250  
SAN RAFAEL, CA 94901

T 415.389.6800 F 415.388.6874

**SACRAMENTO**

1415 L STREET, SUITE 1200  
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814

T 916.446.6752 F 916.446.6106

**NMGOVLAW.COM**

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suggestions that the Committee obscure the fact that two new agencies are created and two old agencies are abolished—cannot be squared with the actual text of the measure itself.

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We would urge you to reject any further efforts to incorporate these proposed changes into the neutral digest, and that you continue to insist that the ballot arguments are the proper forum for such contentions.

Sincerely,



Christopher E. Skinnell