

Ballot Simplification Committee - DRAFT for Consideration on Thursday, March 11, 2010
School Facilities Special Tax (*working title only, subject to change*)

The Way It Is Now: The San Francisco Unified School District (the "District") operates the City's public schools and some child care centers. The District builds, repairs and upgrades its buildings using money from various sources, including voter-approved bond measures and local parcel taxes. State law allows local government agencies such as the District to form a special community facilities district and collect a special tax if the tax is approved by two-thirds of the voters in the district.

In June 1990, the voters adopted a special tax on property to pay for repairs and other improvements to school and child care center buildings damaged by the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. That tax will expire this year. For the last 14 years, the annual special tax on single-family residential and non-residential parcels was up to \$32.20, and the annual special tax on multi-family residential parcels was up to \$16.10 for each dwelling unit. The tax was not adjusted for inflation. The 1990 measure authorized the District to spend each year up to \$12 million of the special tax proceeds.

The Proposal: Proposition __ would authorize a special tax that extends and modifies the special tax adopted in 1990. The District could use the tax for:

- Seismic upgrading and structural strengthening of the District's school and child care center buildings;
- Repairing or replacing fire and other safety systems;
- Deferred capital maintenance, including paying salaries and benefits for employees working on building upgrades and repairs; and
- Incidental expenses such as the cost of planning and design and the collection of taxes.

The tax would last for 20 years. The tax on single-family residential and non-residential parcels would be up to \$32.20 per year, and the tax on multi-family residential parcels would be up to \$16.10 per year for each dwelling unit. These maximum tax rates would be adjusted each year for inflation.

Dwelling units with residents 65 years old and older would be eligible for an exemption from the tax. The measure would authorize the District to spend up to \$16 million per year, adjusted for changes in population and other factors.

A "YES" Vote Means: If you vote "yes," you want to renew the special tax to pay for safety and other improvements to District facilities and you want to authorize an annual spending limit.

A "NO" Vote Means: If you vote "no," you do not want to renew this special tax.

word count: 390 [suggested word limit: 300]