

Defining Clean, Green, and Renewable Energy*

Digest by the Ballot Simplification Committee

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Members: Packard, Fasick, Fraps, Jorgensen, Unruh

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Deadline to Request Reconsideration: 3:45 p.m. on Tuesday, August 4, 2015

The Way It Is Now: San Francisco and other local governments are allowed by state law to purchase and generate electricity to sell to residential and business customers.

San Francisco has created CleanPowerSF, a program to purchase, generate and sell electricity. CleanPowerSF has not yet begun to sell electricity to customers, so most San Francisco residents and businesses currently purchase their electricity from Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E), a private company. San Francisco residents and businesses will be able to choose whether to purchase electricity from PG&E or CleanPowerSF.

The City generates hydroelectric power at its Hetch Hetchy facilities in Tuolumne County and uses this power to meet most of its municipal power needs. The City does not sell this electricity to most San Francisco residents or businesses.

State law requires all retail electricity suppliers to disclose to customers the sources of power being provided, including renewable energy resources. Renewable resources include biomass, solar thermal, photovoltaic, wind, geothermal, solid waste conversion, landfill gas, ocean wave, ocean thermal, and tidal current.

Current City law does not define "Clean Energy," "Green Energy," "Renewable Greenhouse Gas-free Energy," or similar terms.

The State requires that a certain percentage of the electricity provided to customers must come from "eligible renewable energy resources," which include renewable resources located in the Western United States, Canada, and Mexico. San Francisco is allowed to use power from its Hetch Hetchy facilities to meet its required renewable resource percentage.

Under State law, "eligible renewable energy resources" are classified into three different categories, depending primarily on when and where the electricity is generated.

The Proposal: Under Proposition ____, San Francisco would use the State definition of "eligible renewable energy resources" when referring to terms such as "Clean Energy," "Green Energy," and "Renewable Greenhouse Gas-free Energy." Included in this definition is electricity from large hydroelectric facilities such as Hetch Hetchy.

This definition would apply to all City programs and expenditures.

Proposition ____ would urge CleanPowerSF to inform customers and potential customers of the planned percentage of "Clean Energy," "Green Energy," and "Renewable Greenhouse Gas-free Energy" to be supplied in each communication required by law.

Proposition ____ would make it City policy for CleanPowerSF to use electricity generated within California and San Francisco when possible.

A "YES" Vote Means: If you vote "yes," you want San Francisco to use the State definition of "eligible renewable energy resources" when referring to terms such as "Clean Energy," "Green Energy," and "Renewable Greenhouse Gas-free Energy." You also want to urge CleanPowerSF to inform customers and potential customers of the planned percentage of

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types of renewable energy to be supplied in each communication and to make it City policy for CleanPowerSF to use electricity generated within California and San Francisco when possible.

A "NO" Vote Means: If you vote "no," you do not want to establish these definitions.