



B.A.R. ENDORSEMENTS November 2012

B.A.R. election recommendations

Over the past several weeks, we have been publishing our recommendations for the November 6 election. Below is a recap. All of our editorials are available online at www.ebar.com.

San Francisco Supervisors

District 1, which includes the Richmond, is one of three very competitive races this year and we're sticking with current Supervisor Eric Mar. Since taking office four years ago, Mar, a straight ally, has been a solid vote on the board for LGBT and HIV/AIDS issues. He is also devoted to his district, and discussed with us his record in bringing green jobs to the area, as well as his record in job creation as evidenced by small businesses along Clement Street.

In **District 3**, Board of Supervisors President David Chiu is working on increasing City Hall's attention to nightlife issues, noting that in the past year crime at or near popular night spots is down. He has been a steady leader of the board, noting that the tenor among supervisors began to change in 2008. Chiu brings a collaborative attitude to the board that is much needed.

District 5: An out bi woman for most of her adult life and a person of color, appointed Supervisor Christina Olague brings an important queer perspective to the board, which was missing before her appointment. Shortly after joining the board she worked with out Supervisors Scott Wiener and David Campos to request that the mayor backfill millions of dollars in federal AIDS cuts. She worked on programs that addressed the needs of LGBTQ seniors, supports the city's new LGBT Senior Task Force, and was an organizer at the Senior Action Network.

We also admire the courage she exhibited in her vote to reinstate Sheriff Ross Mirkarimi.

District 5, second choice: We were very impressed with candidate **London Breed** in our meeting and she has a lot of good ideas. Breed is a straight ally and a native of the district; she grew up in public housing in the Western Addition. And she wants to put an end to the rampant violence, drug dealing, and other crimes that occur.

District 7: Francis "FX" Crowley, a District 7 native, has a firm grasp of the issues and has a record as a public servant, community volunteer, and leader of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees union. He has a history working with LGBT folks, particularly in his union, where he said he consistently supported LGBT members to seek leadership positions. He thinks it's important that boards and commissions reflect the city's diversity and said he would recommend qualified LGBT candidates for such posts.

District 7, second choice: Norman Yee, currently president of the

school board, is a strong ally to the LGBT community, particularly on matters pertaining to school curriculum and education. He has a reputation as someone who gets things done for children and families in the city and pointed out that for seven years now math and English test scores have improved in public schools.

District 7, third choice: Joel Engardio, who's gay, is running a grassroots campaign in his bid to serve on the board. He pointed out that in San Francisco, there is new territory for LGBT candidates to pioneer. While the district is more conservative than many others in the city, there are shifts happening in some neighborhoods, where there's been an influx of new LGBT residents. Engardio has the support of the Gay

and the knowledge and experience to continue serving on the board and we endorse their re-election. The school district is not in chaos like City College and some of that credit belongs to the board and its leadership.

SF Community College Board

City College of San Francisco is on the brink of possibly closing. The community college, long considered a necessary scholastic institution of San Francisco, may lose its accreditation due to serious problems that were addressed in a critical report issued in June by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges. The commission outlined a series of shortcomings, including an inadequate funding base, lack of a planning process, a failure to react to ongoing reduced

by the governor due to the state's fiscal problems.

Prop D: Consolidating Odd-year Municipal Elections. YES

Currently the mayor, sheriff, and district attorney are elected in November of one year, and the city attorney and treasurer are elected in November of a different year. This measure proposes to consolidate off-year municipal elections with all the above-mentioned positions running in the same election.

Prop E: Gross Receipts Tax. YES

San Francisco is the only city in California that imposes a tax on payrolls. This is a job killer. Prop E would replace the payroll tax with a graduated business tax based on gross receipts. This is a much more

We find GOP presidential candidate Mitt Romney's statement that "corporations are people too," coupled with the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United*, so odious that we have no difficulty supporting Supervisor John Avalos's measure.

California Propositions

Prop 30: Sales and Income Tax Increase Initiative. YES

Prop 31: Two Year State Budget Cycle and Government Performance and Accountability Act: NO

Prop 32: Special Exemptions Act. NO

Prop 33: Automobile Insurance Industry Pricing Act. NO

Prop 34: California Death Penalty Repeal Act. YES

Prop 35: Increased Penalties for Human Trafficking Act. NO

Prop 36: Three Strikes Law Modification. YES

Prop 37: Labeling of Genetically Engineered Foods. YES

Prop 38: Munger Initiative. NO

Prop 39: Income Tax Increase for Multistate Businesses. NO

Prop 40: Referendum on Redistricting. YES

BART Board

Dist. 9: Tom Radulovich, who was first elected in 1996, is the BART board's only out gay member. He pledges to strengthen BART's commitment to civil rights, environmental justice, and diversity.

Dist. 7: A banker by profession, incumbent Lynette Sweet helped lead the BART police department review committee that was established in the aftermath of the Oscar Grant shooting.

East Bay Races

Oakland City Council Dist. 3: Sean Sullivan has the experience and background to begin work immediately. He is a gay man who understands neighbors' concerns about public safety, and attracting businesses to the district.

Oakland City Council At-large: Out lesbian Rebecca Kaplan won this seat in a landslide four years ago and deserves a second term.

National

President: Over the last four years, President Barack Obama had some major accomplishments regarding LGBT rights. Two stand out in our mind: one a major policy change and the other an important symbolic shift – the Democrats' gutsy move in December 2010 to push through repeal of the military's anti-gay "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy with the full support of the president and Obama's May interview in which he came out in support of same-sex marriage. He deserves re-election.

U.S. Senate: Dianne Feinstein has been a solid voice in the U.S. Senate for LGBT rights since she was first elected in 1992. Now seeking re-election, Feinstein is the only choice for our readers and the *Bay Area Reporter* recommends her for another term. ▼

and Lesbian Victory Fund.

District 9: Since winning office four years ago, Supervisor David Campos has worked hard for his Mission district and for the LGBT community, of which he is a part. It speaks volumes that no one filed to run against him in his re-election bid, making this an easy recommendation.

District 11: Supervisor John Avalos became the progressive standard-bearer following his second place finish in last year's mayoral race. He, too, is running unopposed for a second term and has our endorsement. A straight ally, Avalos has long been a leader of issues impacting the LGBT community.

SF Board of Education

Among the non-incumbents running, Matt Haney stands out and we recommend him for election. Haney has direct experience in San Francisco schools, having served on the district's Public Education Enrichment Fund Community Advisory Committee. He is a qualified candidate who can bring much to the city's public schools.

Incumbents Sandra Fewer, Rachel Norton, and Jill Wynns all have

funding, and inadequate administrative leadership.

We say it's time for new leadership – throw the bums out, if you will. There are four seats up on the community college board in November; we recommend three candidates: Rafael Mandelman, Amy Bacharach, and Rodrigo Santos.

San Francisco Propositions

Prop A: City College Parcel Tax. YES

Prop A authorizes a \$79 tax on each parcel of residential and commercial property in San Francisco for eight years.

Prop B: Clean and Safe Neighborhood Parks Bond. YES

Prop B would authorize the city to borrow up to \$195 million by issuing general obligation bonds to fund repairs and improvements to the city's parks and open spaces.

Prop C: Housing Trust Fund. YES

Prop C is a Charter amendment proposed by Mayor Ed Lee with support from the Board of Supervisors and many community organizations to create a Housing Trust Fund that replaces the redevelopment agency, which was eliminated

equitable manner to tax businesses and will bring San Francisco in line with other similar cities in California.

Prop F: Water and Environment Plan. NO

Proposition F mandates the City and County of San Francisco develop a plan to accomplish two goals: the first is to create a more sustainable water system by adopting 21st century efficiency practices such as waste filtration, water recycling, water reclamation, conservation, better storm water capture, and other best practices. So far, so good. Everyone supports water conservation and renewable energy. And for over a decade, the city has worked intensely to upgrade San Francisco's water system. It's the second goal of the plan that should make Prop F dead on arrival: eliminating the Hetch Hetchy reservoir and returning the Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park to the National Park Service to be restored.

Often there is not sufficient rain or snowmelt to meet our needs and Hetch Hetchy provides a reliable source of water that would be folly to give up.

Prop G: Policy Opposing Corporate Personhood. YES



Obama is the clear choice

It should not surprise our readers that we enthusiastically endorse President Barack Obama for re-election. While California is a solid blue state, the November 6 election will be close in several swing states that will likely determine the presidency. Over the last four years, Obama had some major accomplishments regarding LGBT rights. Two stand out in our mind: one a major policy change and the other an important symbolic shift – the Democrats' gutsy move in December 2010 to push through repeal of the military's anti-gay "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy with the full support of the president and Obama's May interview with Robin Roberts in which he came out in support of same-sex marriage.

DADT repeal

The long, slow road to DADT repeal was littered with studies, books, testimonials from retired service members, and op-ed columns. But when then-Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Admiral Mike Mullen told Congress in early 2010 that "my personal belief is that allowing gays and lesbians to serve openly would be the right thing to do," the writing was on the wall. Obama called for an end to the policy in his State of the Union speech that year, and as the months went on more military leaders came to support repeal. With the backing of the top brass, House and Senate members increasingly voiced support for a bill by Senator Joe Lieberman (I-Connecticut), a known hawk on military matters.

After the midterm elections that November it was obvious that the Democrats would lose control of the House in January and so DADT re-

peal was part of a lame-duck congressional session. The days ticked by and advocates became worried that time would run out. It did not. Following an eloquent speech, Obama signed the bill on December 22. It would be another 10 months until the policy was officially rescinded but during that time the service branches went about creating tools to help implement the new policy. Now, just over a year later, there are few negative effects as gay and lesbian service members are allowed to serve openly in the armed forces.

At the time, gay Republicans praised Obama, particularly R. Clarke Cooper, head of the national Log Cabin Republicans, who helped get GOP votes for the repeal (eight Republican senators ended up voting for it). It was disheartening to learn this week that Log Cabin has endorsed GOP candidate Mitt Romney in this presidential election. And while the group said it has a disagreement with Romney on marriage, it's clear to us that a Romney administration would do nothing to help LGBT Americans and would perhaps implement policies that could harm them. Cooper has to know DADT repeal would not have happened with a Republican in the White House. It's that simple.

Marriage equality

Obama had long frustrated LGBTs with his statement awhile back that he was "evolving" on the issue of marriage equality. As public opinion continued to increase in support of same-sex marriage, the president was still talking about the outdated and ineffective civil unions and it grew tiresome.

Obama's remarks on Wednesday, May 9 came just days after Vice Presi-



Lydia Gonzales

President Barack Obama smiles at supporters during a campaign stop in Redwood City in May.

dent Joe Biden said on NBC's *Meet the Press* that he was "absolutely comfortable" with gay couples marrying and the heat was on the president. The White House quickly arranged an interview with ABC's Roberts, and a few days later the president had evolved, stating that after talking with friends and family and neighbors and staff, "I've just concluded that for me personally it is important for me to go ahead and affirm that I think same-sex couples should be able to get married."

It was, as MSNBC's Chris Matthews said, a political earthquake. Since the president's statement, public opinion has grown in support of marriage equality. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People passed a resolution in support of marriage equal-

ity. Several high-profile gays – CNN anchor Anderson Cooper and musician Frank Ocean come first to mind – came out of the closet.

Unfortunately, the president's remarks came one day after voters in North Carolina passed a state ban on same-sex marriage, but the tide is clearly turning as it's possible that at least one of the four marriage initiatives – Washington state, Minnesota, Maryland, and Maine – on the ballot in November will pass.

Tied in to the president's support for marriage equality is his administration's decision to stop defending the Defense of Marriage Act in several federal court cases. By now, several federal courts have found DOMA unconstitutional and the U.S. Supreme Court is likely to take up the issue. Obama endorsed the Respect for Marriage Act, a bill in Congress to repeal DOMA.

Other issues

The Obama administration has moved on other issues important to the LGBT community. It created a national AIDS strategy that had input from communities around the country.

In October 2009, Obama signed the first major gay rights bill, the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, which expands the 1969 United States federal hate crime law to include crimes motivated by a victim's actual or perceived gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.

The administration also extended hospital visitation and medical decision-making rights to LGBT couples. That's a big difference from Romney, who recently said that he thinks hos-

pital visitation for same-sex couples is a benefit, not a right. That's the alternative we're looking at in November if the Republicans win.

The future

In a second Obama administration, we would like to see the president end raids on medical cannabis dispensaries. Attorney General Eric Holder indicated at the start of the administration that the raids, common in the Bush administration, would cease and for awhile they did. But for over a year now the U.S. attorneys in California have been waging a battle that has forced numerous dispensaries to close, depriving patients of easy access to their medicine. Ideally, marijuana should be reclassified from a Schedule I drug, but in the meantime, the administration should stop the raids.

We'd like the president to be more outspoken on matters of racial injustice. A *New York Times* article last Sunday examined the president's complicated issue with race and we think that the nation's first black president should step outside of his comfort zone.

Of course, there are always qualified LGBT people who can be appointed to various posts in the administration. Obama has done a good job so far, but there are still lavender ceilings to be broken.

Progress on LGBT rights will cease if Romney wins. LGBTs will be scapegoated, discriminated against, and relegated to second-class status. Republicans are currently pushing back the rights of women and immigrants. Under this president, we have seen much progress. We want that to continue. ▼

Feinstein for U.S. Senate

Dianne Feinstein has been a solid voice in the U.S. Senate for LGBT rights since she was first elected in 1992. Now seeking re-election, Feinstein is the only choice for our readers and the *Bay Area Reporter* recommends her for another term.

While Feinstein is seen as the more moderate of California's two Democratic senators, she has long stood up for equal rights. To her credit, Feinstein was one of only a handful of senators to vote against both "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and the Defense of Marriage Act; and these votes occurred at a time when discrimination against LGBT Americans was widespread, including among many Democrats. Four years ago, during the Proposition 8 campaign, Feinstein came out in support of marriage equality and was featured in one of the No on 8 campaign's more effective television

ads, though that was not enough to persuade voters not to ban same-sex marriage. Four years before that, she, of course, famously chided then-San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom for ordering city officials to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples, saying his decision was "too much, too fast, too soon." But Newsom had a point, and helped further the marriage equality debate.

Last year, Feinstein introduced the Respect for Marriage Act, which would repeal DOMA. Unfortunately because of Senate rules, the bill has not yet been voted on and in today's hyper-partisan political climate, it's not likely to go to the floor in the few remaining months of this Congress. During a recent meeting with the *B.A.R.* editorial board, Feinstein said that she plans to reintroduce the bill after the new Congress con-



Rick Gerharter

Senator Dianne Feinstein

venes in January. But she added that she hopes the U.S. Supreme Court "beats her to it" – regarding DOMA's demise – and that is a real possibility now that the anti-gay law has been ruled unconstitutional by several federal courts.

One of the realities of today's Senate is that it often takes years to pass legislation. Feinstein gave us examples of how it has taken her 10 years to see a fuel mileage efficiency bill passed. "It's a long slog and it takes time, and this is a very controversial bill," she said of the Respect for Marriage Act.

Feinstein is a member of the powerful Senate Judiciary Committee, and in that role has vetted Supreme Court nominees and other federal judicial officers. It's an important job, as the president seeks to fill vacancies with appointees who more

closely match his philosophy and not that of conservative ideologues who believe that the U.S. Constitution is not a living document and should be read literally.

On the issue of immigration reform, we would like to see the senator support the Uniting American Families Act, which was introduced by Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vermont) in 2011. But she told us that her focus now is on her marriage bill. Until either of these bills finds enough senators to sponsor them, floor votes are unlikely.

Californians need Feinstein's voice in the Senate; she is poised to win re-election, as she faces a Republican candidate with little name recognition. Sending Feinstein, a powerful ally, back to Washington can only help in the march toward LGBT equality. ▼

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Sullivan, Kaplan for Oakland council

This year the Oakland City Council will get at least three new members and that is welcome news to residents. For too long the council has been dysfunctional, to the point that meetings have been canceled because protesters have halted proceedings. That shouldn't happen in local government and, when it does, it's clear that new leadership is needed. On the other hand, voters have an opportunity to retain one of the council members who is effective and who has shaken things up since she took office four years ago.

We're endorsing two candidates for the November election: Sean Sullivan in District 3, and incumbent Rebecca Kaplan for the at-large seat.

District 3

Oakland's District 3 is a vibrant mix that includes West Oakland, downtown and Uptown, Telegraph and Mosswood, Adams Point, Eastlake, and Jack London Square. Of the six candidates running, Sean Sullivan has the experience and background to begin work immediately. He almost won against the incumbent four years ago and this time the seat is open. Sullivan is a gay man who understands neighbors' concerns about public safety, and attracting businesses to the district.

One of the big problems in Oakland right now is the police department. It faces a federal takeover in December if a federal judge decides that not enough progress has been made fixing numerous deficiencies,

all stemming from the infamous Riders case back in 2000 in which some officers were accused of beating and framing suspects in West Oakland. The city paid out millions of dollars in lawsuits stemming from the cases and OPD was ordered to make substantial reforms. To date, according to a *San Francisco Chronicle* article this week, several of the reforms have not been completed. Sullivan told us that he hopes the department is not placed in federal receivership. If that happens, he said, the city might be ordered to hire 1,000 officers and that would immediately shut down libraries, parks and result in more furloughs of other city workers. Instead, he would like to see the department complete the reforms on its own.

Public safety is a dominant issue in Oakland, which just had its 100th homicide of the year this week. But Sullivan does not support gang injunctions or curfews for young people. He has said that he favors more community policing in the district, where officers walk the beats and get to know people in the neighborhood. And he does support hiring more officers, but at a rate that the city can afford. Right now there is an academy in session with 35 potential officers. "What we need to do, we need to continue to fund police academies," he told us. "We also need to get more police on the streets." He pointed out that the city purchased a fleet of bicycles for police, but that they are largely unused — he would like to change that.

Sullivan believes the culture of the



Elliot Owen

Oakland City Council candidate Sean Sullivan makes a point during a recent forum.

police department needs to change, including greater training around diversity.

Next to public safety, the economy is an equally important issue as Oakland struggles with high unemployment, particularly in communities of color. A Target store that opened last year on the Oakland-Emeryville border employs local residents and brought in an unexpected \$6 million in tax revenue, he noted. Plans for the former Oakland Army Base must include smart growth. He envisions some of the tech jobs in Emeryville migrating to West Oakland and wants to change the perception that Oakland is unfriendly to business and unsafe.

Sullivan would be a strong addition to the City Council. He would be the first out gay man in several years, in a city that has an increasing LGBT population. He is an advocate for more transparency in local government — something that the city desperately needs.

At-large

The city of Oakland is divided into seven council districts and then there is the eighth seat, at-large, which represents the entire city. Out lesbian Rebecca Kaplan won this seat in a landslide four years ago and deserves a second term. Kaplan's path to re-election became complicated this summer when longtime District 5 Councilman Ignacio De La Fuente decided to run against her rather than seek re-election to his Fruitvale area seat. It's been speculated that De La Fuente entered the at-large race in an effort to bolster his chances at running for mayor in two years.

Kaplan is the city's most popular political leader and has managed to accomplish several initiatives since taking office. Perhaps most importantly, she voted against the police layoffs a couple years ago, although she was on the short end of that vote. She supports Operation Ceasefire (as does Sullivan), an innovative crime prevention program that works with offenders and offers them help. She supports creative and successful programs to help with ex-felon re-entry, which are necessary for the city where a majority of crimes are committed by ex-offenders, who are often re-

leased from prison with no resources to make positive changes in their lives.

Kaplan helped secure funding for the free Broadway shuttle bus service that provides residents and visitors alike with transportation to work, shopping, or dining in the city's well-known restaurants. The formation of business improvement districts has led to safety ambassadors for downtown and Uptown, a program Kaplan would like to see expanded.

Another issue Kaplan has addressed is blight and she has tried to make reporting easier for residents.

Regarding job development Kaplan supports the Army Base redevelopment, the Coliseum City project, and the \$7.7 billion countywide transportation plan that would bring thousands of good-paying union jobs to Oakland.

Oakland finds itself at a turning point, as the economy slowly rebounds, the city must take advantage of programs and development that will add to its tax base, which in turn would enable the city to hire more police officers (it is woefully understaffed with only 631 sworn officers). But those officers need to be better trained and respectful of the city's residents. The city needs to strengthen its outreach to a growing LGBT community, and include out people on boards and commissions. Oakland has long been viewed as the step-sister of San Francisco; with its vibrant nightlife and foodie scene, Oakland is beginning to come into its own. But Oakland needs leadership: Sullivan and Kaplan are two capable people who can help lead the city into its future. ▼

Olague for D5 supervisor

From the moment Mayor Ed Lee appointed her to fill the remainder of Ross Mirkarimi's term, Supervisor Christina Olague has traveled a difficult path and faces a tough race for a full term on the Board of Supervisors. Olague has upset progressives and moderates alike by changing her mind on certain issues as she found her footing. She has had virtually no "honeymoon" on the board as she's had to immediately raise money for her election campaign and fend off her challengers.

We are, however, extremely pleased with the courage she exhibited Tuesday night in voting to reinstate Sheriff Mirkarimi. Her vote, along with those by her colleagues (Supervisors John Avalos, David Campos, and Jane Kim), was a powerful statement against the mayoral abuse of power and the politicized nature of the case and reflects the unique make-up of District 5, which Mirkarimi represented for seven years on the Board of Supervisors and where he remains very popular.

Olague is our first choice for District 5 supervisor.

In a public statement, Olague said that she took a "very pragmatic approach to reviewing the charges and establishing my understanding of both the facts and the recommendation before us."

"As a member of this board, I take very seriously the responsibility to represent the citizens of my district and of this city and to uphold the duties required of me as outlined by the charter," she added. That said, after reviewing the case, she determined that "the removal of any elected official from office requires

that the mayor supply evidence that demonstrates, with great certainty, that the charter prescribed definition of official misconduct was violated." She said that she could not find Mirkarimi's "actions were executed through his authority as a sheriff, and I will not be supporting a motion to sustain the charges."

Politicians too often are more concerned with their next race than doing the right thing. Olague's vote Tuesday proved the opposite; she has likely upset a lot of people, including the mayor who appointed her and his powerful backers. But her action showed guts and resolve. It is a vivid example of how she will work to put her constituents first.

An out bi woman for most of her adult life and a person of color, Olague brings an important queer perspective to the board, which was missing before her appointment. Shortly after joining the board she worked with out Supervisors Scott Wiener and David Campos to request that the mayor backfill millions of dollars in federal AIDS cuts. She worked on programs that addressed the needs of LGBTQ seniors, supports the city's new LGBT Senior Task Force, and was an organizer at the Senior Action Network.

Olague has experience in development and planning — she's the former president of the Planning Commission — and would like to see more transparency from the Mayor's Office of Housing, which currently controls the in-lieu fees paid by developers for affordable housing. She is a strong proponent of Openhouse's planned housing development for LGBT seniors at 55 Laguna Street.



Rick Gerhartner

District 5 Supervisor Christina Olague

At the other end of the spectrum, a lot of young people are coming to the district and many in the Haight, like the Castro, are LGBT and there is no place for them to go. "I think we have to be more compassionate," Olague said of homeless queer youth. "It's not such a black and white issue."

Olague is a political novice and that shows at times. When Olague met with us, she acknowledged that she could have spent more time trying to secure the endorsement of either Milk or Alice, the city's two main LGBT Democratic clubs. That she received no recommendation from either club is troubling.

The race in District 5 is perhaps the toughest in the city this year. Olague cares about District 5 and has done her best to represent it. Voters will ultimately make the decision, but Olague has a record of accomplishment and has been effective

in the 10 months she has served.

Second choice, London Breed

Among those candidates challenging the incumbent one stands out: London Breed is our second choice in the race.

Breed is a straight ally and native of the district; she grew up in public housing in the Western Addition. And she wants to put an end to the rampant violence, drug dealing, and other crimes that occur. "Now, I'm going to funerals of kids I grew up with," she told us in an editorial board meeting. She also lost a sister to a drug overdose and has a brother in jail, so she knows first hand the human toll drugs and violence can take on a community.

We were very impressed with Breed in our meeting and she has a lot of good ideas. She is also determined. "I'm honest and not for sale," she said when asked why she's the better candidate for District 5, which also includes the Haight, Inner Sunset, and Alamo Square, where Breed attends Third Baptist Church.

For the last 10 years Breed has served as the executive director of the African American Art and Culture Complex, where she raised over \$2.5 million to renovate the facilities. She said that she has a "great relationship" with the supervisors and can work with Mayor Ed Lee. She has served on two city commissions (and is currently on the Fire Commission), knows most of the department heads, and at one time served as an intern for Bevan Duffy. In short, she would hit the ground running.

On the issue of housing, Breed,

a former redevelopment commissioner, maintains that developers should build the required affordable housing units simultaneously with the project and perhaps even within the development itself. "There is a lot of money sitting in [the Mayor's Office of Housing] and housing is not sitting there," she said. "My approach would be to build the affordable housing simultaneous with the development even if it's not at the same place."

She also supports the proposed California Pacific Medical Center hospital on Van Ness, but only if CPMC lives up to its obligation to renovate St. Luke's Hospital. "They've got to do better with the nurses, particularly. The deal has to be a good deal for San Francisco because it's a good deal for CPMC," she said.

Regarding LGBT issues, Breed supports marriage equality, a question she said she gets asked by same-sex couples when she's out campaigning. Her pastor, the Reverend Amos Brown, is one of the few African American pastors who have stepped up to support marriage equality. Leaders in the African American community need to be natural when speaking of their support, she said. "We have to instill respect and compassion to kids now," she said. "In my mind, that's how I grew up. I'm not one who tolerates hate."

Breed will be a powerful advocate for District 5 and the city. She understands San Francisco values and wants to help those in need. "An opportunity — not a handout — is what we need," she said. ▼

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Crowley for supervisor in D7

Voters west of Twin Peaks in District 7 will elect a new supervisor next month. After two terms, Supervisor Sean Elsbernd is terming out. The district is probably the most conservative in San Francisco, although demographics are changing and there are more and more LGBT people living there. This year, there's even a gay man running to represent the district. But of the candidates running, our first selection – in ranked choice voting – goes to Francis “FX” Crowley.

Crowley, a District 7 native, has a firm grasp of the issues and has a record as a public servant, community volunteer, and leader of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees union. As a member of the Port Commission, Crowley understands the issues affecting the city's waterfront, including development (he supported the 8 Washington condo complex while serving on the Port Commission, but says he does not support unencumbered devel-

opment). In District 7, he cited Lake Merced as a critical issue and said that its deterioration has frustrated those who want to enjoy the lake and its recreational activities. As a supervisor, he said he would work with city agencies to restore the lake's water quality.

He has a history working with LGBT folks, particularly in his union, where he said he consistently supported LGBT members to seek leadership positions. He thinks it's important that boards and commissions reflect the city's diversity and said he would recommend qualified LGBT candidates for such posts.

We found Crowley to be knowledgeable about city issues and in tune with his district. He is our first choice for supervisor.

Second choice: Norman Yee

Norman Yee, currently president of the school board, is a strong ally to the LGBT community, particularly on matters pertaining to school



Rick Gerharter

District 7 candidate Francis “FX” Crowley

curriculum and education. He has a reputation as someone who gets things done for children and families in the city and pointed out that for seven years now math and English test scores have improved in public schools.

His main concerns are job creation and access to health care, as well as increasing the supply of affordable housing.

Yee supports a vibrant nightlife in the city, and said that increased access to public transportation and the availability of taxicabs in District 7 is important because it is nearly impossible to hail a cab or travel late at night in the southeast portions of the city and in his district. He also supports community policing, which he said helps build relationships between residents and the police and could address concerns raised by neighbors in areas where there are issues of noise and public intoxication after clubs close.

In short, we believe Yee would be a good supervisor.

Third choice: Joel Engardio

Gay District 7 resident Joel Engardio is running a grassroots campaign in his bid to serve on the board. He

pointed out that in San Francisco, there is new territory for LGBT candidates to pioneer. While the district is more conservative than many others in the city, there are shifts happening in some neighborhoods, where there's been an influx of new LGBT residents. Engardio has the support of the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund.

Engardio said that his big issue is fiscal responsibility. A former journalist, Engardio believes that the city must be accountable to voters for how it spends public dollars, and that general fund money, rather than borrowed funds, should be used for projects like street repair. Unfortunately, in this economy, the city's general fund is strapped, which is why voters have passed various bond measures for capital projects.

Engardio said he is an independent, and would not be beholden to the various interests at City Hall. He said that he is a common sense candidate who happens to be gay. ▼

Haney for SF school board

There are four seats up for a vote on the San Francisco Unified School District board next month.

Among the non-incumbents running, Matt Haney stands out and we recommend him for election. Haney has direct experience in San Francisco schools, having served on the district's Public Education Enrichment Fund Community Advisory Committee. He also co-founded Citizen Hope, a community service organization that has linked dollars and volunteers with the city's schools. As the executive director of the UC Student Association, he works directly for the over 200,000 students in the UC system, managing a budget of over half a million dollars and staffers.

Haney believes that addressing the district's funding challenges is a priority, including the reauthorization of Prop H (public education enrichment fund) and building coalitions in the city and statewide

to secure revenue streams from the state to fund public education. His other vision for the district is to ensure college/career readiness for all students by closing the achievement gap with real world learning skills and curriculum.

Haney – and the other candidates we are endorsing in this race – supports the Fair, Accurate, Inclusive, and Respectful Education Act and has some good ideas for widening lesson plans by drawing on curriculum from the Museum of Tolerance, where he used to be an educator.

In short, Haney is a qualified candidate who can bring much to the city's public schools.

Sandra Fewer, Rachel Norton, and Jill Wynns

Unlike our recent recommendations for City College board, for which we did not endorse any of the incumbents, the three women run-



Courtesy Haney campaign

School board candidate Matt Haney

ning for re-election to the school board deserve your vote. The school district is not in chaos like City College and some of that credit belongs to the board and its leadership.

Incumbents Sandra Fewer, Rachel Norton, and Jill Wynns all have the

knowledge and experience to continue serving on the board.

Fewer pointed to the fact that the district is implementing a two-year budget “that has helped us keep financially stable.” But she correctly noted that the district will face huge challenges if voters don't pass state Proposition 30, Governor Jerry Brown's tax plan.

In terms of LGBT students, Fewer said she would propose an anti-bullying measure to train teachers and school staff on acceptable behavior, since one of the recurring problems seems to be that adults do not intervene when there is harassment or bullying.

Norton pointed out that city voters have been very generous with their support of public schools and that Prop H needs to be reauthorized. But she said that until state funding is adequate local efforts are mere Band-Aids. Norton also said that the district's committed LGBT support staff

person is only funded part-time for this work and she would like to see the position funded at full-time as soon as the budget gap eases.

Wynns, one of the longest-serving board members, has a deep understanding of the district and has expertise in school finance and other policy areas. She is also president of the California School Boards Association, where she can influence policy development. She praised the new superintendent, Richard Carranza, for making student engagement a priority this year and for using the documentary *Bully* as a training tool for administrators and teachers.

These four candidates – Haney, Fewer, Norton, and Wynns – are all well qualified and have students' best interest in mind. It's not easy running a school district in this time of diminished state funding and tough decisions sometimes need to be made. These candidates are up to that task. ▼

Radulovich, Sweet for BART board

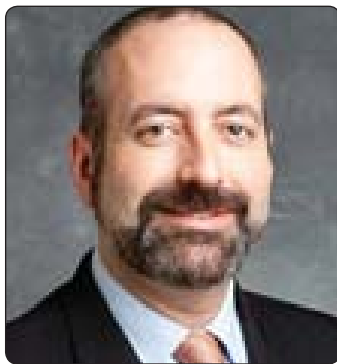
Two BART districts that include all or part of San Francisco are on the ballot and we recommend incumbent directors Tom Radulovich in District 9 and Lynette Sweet in District 7.

Radulovich, who was first elected in 1996, is the BART board's only out gay member, though that could change if Rebecca Saltzman, running in an East Bay district, is elected. A progressive, Radulovich has fought for police accountability on the board and reformed police training.

He pledges to strengthen BART's

commitment to civil rights, environmental justice, and diversity. He also wants to work toward renewing the aging BART system, improve frequency of trains, expand hours, and upgrade BART stations. He is executive director of Livable City, an organization that works to create transit and bike-friendly policies in San Francisco.

Sweet has served on the BART board since 2003 when she was appointed; she has gone on to win election in 2004 and 2008. Hers is the only BART district to span the bay



BART Director Tom Radulovich



BART Director Lynette Sweet

and she has constituents in all three BART district counties: San Francisco, Alameda, and Contra Costa.

A banker by profession, Sweet was involved in the BART police department review committee that was established in the aftermath of the Oscar Grant shooting.

She has been an effective BART board member and is deserving of another term.

Both Radulovich and Sweet have been capable directors on the transit board and are deserving of re-election. ▼

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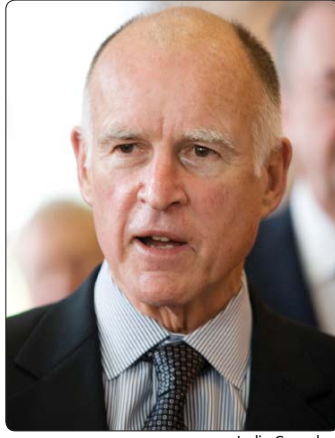
CA tax measures – Yes on 30; No on 38

Both Propositions 30 and 38 would increase state taxes. Prop 30 was crafted by Governor Jerry Brown and is an initiative constitutional amendment, also known as the Schools and Local Public Safety Protection Act. It came about after his failure to negotiate a compromise with the state Legislature to close the state's budget gap. Prop 38, titled the same as Prop 30, was crafted by wealthy attorney Molly Munger and essentially completely financed by her. They are competing measures, and, if they both win, the one with the most votes takes effect. We believe Prop 30 is better reasoned and less harmful to the middle class and recommend a YES vote. We recommend a NO vote on Prop 38.

Anyone paying attention knows the dire straits the state of California is in. Unemployment is among the highest in the nation. Tax revenues have plummeted and public

services, from education to public safety, have sustained draconian cuts. Failure to adopt a meaningful tax increase measure will have unthinkable consequences.

Prop 30 raises the tax rate on those taxpayers most able to pay. It raises the personal income tax rate on individuals making more than \$250,000 a year but less than \$300,000 by 1 percent. Single taxpayers earning between \$300,000 and \$500,000 annually would see their income tax rate increased by 2 percent, and earners over \$500,000 would have their taxes increased by 3 percent. The earnings thresholds are doubled for married taxpayers. For single taxpayers earning less than \$250,000 (\$500,000 if married), there would be no tax rate increase. These new tax rates would be temporary and in place for seven years. Additionally, Prop 30 raises the state sales tax by a quarter cent for the next four years. It aims to



Lydia Gonzales

Governor Jerry Brown

raise about \$6 billion annually.

Prop 38 is a much broader measure, raising taxes on essentially all taxpayers beginning with singles earning \$7,316 (\$14,632 for married taxpayers). The rate of increase

starts at 0.4 percent and goes up to 2.2 percent for singles earning more than \$2.5 million or joint filers over \$5 million. It aims to raise \$10 billion annually over 10 years.

We support Prop 30 for several reasons, not the least of which is that it is the product of the political process (although attempts to reach a legislative compromise failed) in which the governor, the Democratic majorities in the Legislature, and affected stakeholders were all part of the negotiations and compromise that resulted in the proposition before the voters. Prop 38 did not result from a collaborative process but was the plan put forward by one wealthy individual.

New revenues from Prop 30 would be used to help balance the state budget and to fund schools. The current budget adopted by the legislature is linked to Prop 30. If it goes down to defeat, it will cause "trigger cuts" to go into effect.

Schools and community colleges would lose some \$5.4 billion; the University of California and California State Universities would lose another one half billion. Public safety (city police department grants and firefighter services) would lose tens of millions of dollars. Flood control programs and local water safety patrol grants would lose another \$10 million. These figures are provided by the Legislative Analyst's office.

Prop 30 has the broad support of education and public safety groups as well as health care and business and community organizations. Labor strongly supports Prop 30.

Prop 30 is a reasoned approach to a dire problem. Failure to act will have catastrophic consequences to education and public safety in California. It asks those in the higher income brackets who can afford to pay more to increase their support for the common good. Vote YES on Prop 30 and NO on Prop 38. ▼

Mar for supervisor in District 1

San Franciscans living in odd-numbered supervisorial districts will head to the polls in November – or begin casting ballots in early voting next month – and their decisions could reshape the board. On balance, however, we're satisfied with the work the board has done and in this first set of recommendations, will stay with the status quo.

An important position shared by all of these endorsed candidates is that they have committed to backfilling any federal cuts to Ryan White AIDS funding. In this time of decreasing federal monies, this was an important question that we posed to the candidates.

District 1, which includes the Richmond, is one of three very competitive races this year and we're sticking with current Supervisor Eric Mar. Since taking office four years ago, Mar, a straight ally, has been a solid vote on the board for LGBT and HIV/AIDS issues. He is also devoted to his district, and discussed with us his record in bringing green jobs to the area, as well as his record in job creation evidenced by small businesses along Clement Street.

"I want a livable, healthy economy for the city," Mar told us during a recent editorial board meeting. "My record makes it better for everyone."

Mar has worked with the small business community and merchants' associations to pass legislation allowing for more active and attractive storefronts, renovation of existing buildings, and protections against formula retail in District 1. He has legislation that would ease old zoning laws to allow for more

food establishments and manufacturing in different areas.

He plans to introduce legislation this month – Good Jobs, Healthy Communities – that might help independent grocers convert from cigarettes and liquor to healthier foods and provide incentives for landlords to fill empty storefronts.

Regarding public safety, Mar worked with the police captain, residents, and merchants to develop a merchant watch following reports of armed robberies.

Mar said that he is an independent supervisor who studies things carefully. And he's not afraid to take a stand, even at his own expense, as he did when he authored legislation to ban children's toys in fast food meals and was the subject of jokes on late night talk shows. That Happy Meal ban, he said, helped change the culture in a time of mounting childhood obesity rates. "McDonald's and Burger King made major changes," he noted, citing the addition of apple slices and removing French fries as a default menu item.

"I do feel like we made small progress and I think we raised the issue among parents," he said.

We believe that Mar has been an effective leader for his district and is deserving of a second term.

District 3 – David Chiu

Another steadfast ally of the LGBT community is current Board of Supervisors President David Chiu. He faces opposition from three little known challengers and we recommend him for re-election.

Four years ago, Chiu won with backing from progressives. But over the years he has forged an indepen-



Rick Gerharter

District 1 Supervisor Eric Mar

dent path, angering some along the way, while building bridges with other factions. He has been a steady leader of the board, noting that the tenor among supervisors began to change in 2008.

"I'm happy with the progress we've made," he said of changes at the board. "It has improved in our ability to provide leadership."

Chiu, an attorney who's worked as a criminal prosecutor, civil rights lawyer, business founder, and neighborhood leader, has worked alongside communities to deliver results for District 3's neighborhoods and the entire city, he wrote in our questionnaire. "We've created thousands of jobs by reforming our business payroll tax, bringing projects like the Exploratorium, cruise terminal, and America's Cup to our waterfront, and cutting red tape and unnecessary small business fees."

In District 3, Chiu is working on increasing City Hall's attention to nightlife issues, noting that in the past year crime at or near popular night spots is down.

In short, Chiu brings a collaborative attitude to the board that is much needed.

District 9 – David Campos

Since winning office four years ago, Supervisor David Campos has worked hard for his Mission district and for the LGBT community, of which he is a part. It speaks volumes that no one filed to run against him in his re-election bid, making this an easy recommendation.

Campos has worked with the board's other out members, Scott Wiener and Christina Olague, to tackle challenges faced by LGBT seniors. This year, the trio worked to establish an LGBT senior task force, which will soon begin meeting.

Another effort that Campos has led is the creation of a shelter for homeless LGBT people. That project, however, has taken longer to develop, due to permitting and other issues. But Campos is unwavering in his advocacy for the homeless – youth and adult alike – and called a hearing specifically to address the horrendous conditions in the city's shelters, and how LGBT people are often targets of harassment and discrimination in them.

Campos sees public safety and job creation as key issues in District 9. In our questionnaire, he pointed out that there are now more foot patrols in the district, and officers receive better training as they interact with the district's very diverse community, which includes LGBTs.

In terms of job creation, Campos

worked with District 2 Supervisor Mark Farrell to pass legislation that gives small businesses tax breaks that had previously only been available to large companies like Twitter.

Campos has been an effective supervisor who deserves another term.

District 11 – John Avalos

District 11 Supervisor John Avalos became the progressive standard-bearer following his second place finish in last year's mayoral race. He, too, is running unopposed for a second term and has our endorsement.

A straight ally, Avalos has long been a leader of issues impacting the LGBT community. Since moving to the city in 1989, he has helped San Franciscans improve their lives and transform their communities. While on the board he has championed historic local hiring legislation and passed protections for tenants in foreclosed properties. His real estate transfer tax brought in over \$50 million in new revenue per year, helping balance the city's budget. This year he is working with Mayor Ed Lee to pass the gross receipts tax (Prop E), which would generate \$12 million in revenue.

Avalos will continue to work on these and other issues, such as affordable housing; the collapse of the housing market has led to many families losing their homes to foreclosure in District 11, which includes the Excelsior. He is a strong supporter of the Housing Trust Fund (Prop C).

Avalos has done an excellent job representing his district and deserves another term. ▼

Scroll down

Mandelman for City College board

City College of San Francisco is on the brink of possibly closing. The community college, long considered a necessary scholastic institution of San Francisco, may lose its accreditation due to serious problems that were addressed in a critical report issued in June by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges. The commission outlined a series of shortcomings, including an inadequate funding base, lack of a planning process, a failure to react to ongoing reduced funding, and inadequate administrative leadership.

"The commission is concerned that leadership weaknesses at all levels, and established campus precedents for governance structures, decision-making priorities, and processes, have kept City College of San Francisco from adapting to its changed and changing fiscal environment," the report's executive summary letter stated.

Much of that leadership responsibility rests on the elected Board of Trustees. The college's last chancellor stepped down due to health issues; interim Chancellor Pamila Fisher, who was hired in May, is expected to leave next month, shortly after an October 15 deadline for the college to submit a special report to ACCJC. And yet, the trustees, three of whom are up for re-election this year, have seemed incapable or unwilling to make the tough decisions needed to save the school, its nine campuses, and 86,000 students. Every other community college in California has had to deal with dras-

tic reductions in state funding over the past several years, but none is facing the loss of accreditation like City College.

We say it's time for new leadership – throw the bums out, if you will. There are four seats up on the community college board in November; we recommend three people: Rafael Mandelman, Amy Bacharach, and Rodrigo Santos.

Of the three, Mandelman has our strongest support. A gay man who has long been involved in Democratic Party activities (he sits on the county central committee) and is an attorney, Mandelman would bring a set of leadership skills we think the board needs. Mandelman will be an effective trustee; he has served on boards before.

"I think I have more of an idea than some trustees of what makes a good board member," he told us.

The current board now seems split into two camps, with one group fighting with staff and other, well, we're not sure what they're doing. Trustee Lawrence Wong (who is not up this cycle) failed to attend about a third of the meetings last year.

Mandelman can also help in another critical area: fundraising. The college, with an enrollment of 86,000, has a vast network of alumni should be tapped as donors, said Mandelman. He also talked about lobbying the business community to support City College, after all, the campus is the city's largest workforce trainer and that benefits companies in the area.

"People want City College to suc-



Rick Gerharter

City College board candidate
Rafael Mandelman

ceed," Mandelman said.

Not all of City College's problems can be laid on the board, given the state's dire financial situation that has resulted in millions of dollars in cuts to higher education. But Mandelman is right when he points out that the board has not engaged enough with those outside of the City College community.

The infighting and tension on the board needs to stop if it is to be effective in addressing the very serious problems at City College.

Electing Rafael Mandelman would be an excellent addition to the City College board.

Amy Bacharach

A newcomer to city politics, Amy Bacharach is a straight ally who said in her questionnaire answers that she has participated in San Francisco's Pride Parades and supports various LGBT organizations.

Bacharach, who said she went from a high school drop-out to obtaining her Ph.D. degree, works as a researcher and evaluator for California's Administrative Office of the Courts and is an adjunct professor. More importantly, she has experience working with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges – the body that oversees the ACCJC – and served as a student government representative for seven campuses while coordinating with the board and university president. As a result, she can bring several perspectives to the board from research, student, and faculty experiences.

Bacharach said that the seriousness of the accreditation situation should be the standard for all decision-making and that the board's immediate priority must be to address each of the ACCJC's 14 recommendations in a sufficient way. Like Mandelman, she also sees great value in creating a strong alumni group.

Rodrigo Santos

A new face on the college board is Rodrigo Santos, whom Mayor Ed Lee appointed in August to fill the last few months of the late Milton Marks's term. He is also a candidate for a full four-year term.

In written responses to our questions, Santos, a straight man and a naturalized U.S. citizen from Ecuador, said that his immediate vision is to "prevent the loss of accreditation and begin to bring back proper management of the budget."

He also said that in his role as a trustee, he will aid and support the chancellor, and at the same time hold that person accountable to maintaining the college.

A structural engineer, Santos, a Democrat, is more moderate than Mandelman, but he said that he will use his private and public sector experience to restore fiscal accountability, institute common sense budget practices, rebuild the college's technology infrastructure, and expand student recruitment in local schools. He, too, advocates working with the private sector to bring more financial resources to City College.

Santos would be a good fit for the board.

Right now, the board's best hope is likely to come in the form of a special trustee, which the trustees approved a couple weeks ago. While there are questions about how much this person would be paid and what power he or she may have, the alternative would have been for the state to impose a special trustee, and the board would have ceded its power.

At the same time, it's clear that the incumbent board is not doing its job and it's time for new leadership. Mandelman, Bacharach, and Santos would change the board's dynamic and make it more effective. ▼

San Francisco ballot measures

Prop A: City College Parcel Tax. YES

Prop A authorizes a \$79 tax on each parcel of residential and commercial property in San Francisco for eight years. It anticipates raising an additional \$15 million annually for City College of San Francisco. According to the city's Department of Elections Ballot Simplification Committee, the funds would be used by City College to maintain core academic courses, including English, math and science; provide workforce training, including nursing, engineering, business, and technology; provide an education that prepares students for four-year universities; keep City College libraries and student support services open; keep technology and instructional support up to date; and offset state budget cuts.

The entire structure of public education in California, from city colleges to state universities, has been severely and negatively impacted by state and local budget cuts and declining revenues. Not only is this the case for City College of San Francisco, but CCSF has also been plagued by scandal, administrative inefficiencies, and even the threat of losing its accreditation from the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges. Without accreditation, schools are prohibited by law from offering financial aid.

In spite of its difficulties, we support Prop A because City College is an integral part of the fabric of San Francisco. It is the most dependable option for educational opportunity, serving nearly 100,000 students of all incomes, ages, and ethnicities across the city. We are particularly mindful of the safe and positive educational environment it has provided for many thousands of San Francisco's LGBT residents and its programming focusing on LGBT issues. For thousands of students, it has provided a necessary foundation for moving on to four-year colleges and stable employment. Many

of San Francisco's prominent leaders from all fields began at City College. And it is vital to the economy of San Francisco, being the largest provider of workforce training in the city, offering programs in engineering, nursing, and technology and re-training to teach workers new skills.

In the last budget year, City College saw its budget slashed by \$20 million. The school cut 700 classes this semester. With this parcel tax and the backfill that will be provided by state Proposition 30 (which we also support), this will provide City College the resources to stabilize itself while it addresses its myriad other problems. City College is too precious a resource to lose for San Francisco and for its residents. That is why we recommend a YES vote on Prop A.

Prop B: Clean and Safe Neighborhood Parks Bond. YES

Prop B would authorize the city to borrow up to \$195 million by issuing general obligation bonds to fund repairs and improvements to the city's parks and open spaces. The city maintains more than 200 parks, recreation facilities, playgrounds, and other open spaces throughout San Francisco. They are vital resources for residents and visitors alike. It does not take a study, although several have been conducted, the most recent in 2007, to reveal that many parks and recreational facilities are outdated and pose seismic and safety risks. This necessary infrastructure measure has broad community support. We recommend a YES vote for Prop B.

Prop C: Housing Trust Fund. YES

Prop C is a Charter amendment proposed by Mayor Ed Lee with support from the Board of Supervisors and many community organizations to create a Housing Trust Fund



Rick Gerharter

Vernicia Hodgson, right, joined about 200 supporters of City College during a spirited rally on the City Hall steps in support of Proposition A earlier this month.

for much needed low income and affordable housing construction and improvement; provide a loan program for down payment assistance for moderate income homebuyers and emergency first responders, such as police and firefighters; and help eligible households avoid foreclosure or eviction or improve the safety, efficiency or accessibility of their homes. It is to be funded by an initial contribution by the city of \$20 million in 2013 followed by annual contributions of \$2.8 million until the fund reaches \$50.8 million.

San Francisco is one of the most expensive cities in the world. Maintaining our diversity with affordable and low-income housing is a city priority and a San Francisco value. Vote YES on C.

Prop D: Consolidating Odd-year Municipal Elections. YES

Currently the mayor, sheriff, and district attorney are elected in No-

ember of one year, and the city attorney and treasurer are elected in November of a different year. This measure proposes to consolidate off-year municipal elections with all the above-mentioned positions running in the same election. It will save the city's general fund \$4.2 million each time we don't hold a separate election for city attorney and treasurer. This is a good-government, efficiency proposition and should be adopted. Vote YES on Prop D.

Prop E: Gross Receipts Tax. YES

San Francisco is the only city in California that imposes a tax on payrolls. This is a job killer and a deterrent in efforts to get businesses, particularly start-ups and high tech businesses with large payrolls and meager income, to locate in San Francisco. Prop E would replace the payroll tax with a graduated business tax based on gross receipts. This is a much more equitable manner to tax businesses and

will bring San Francisco in line with other similar cities in California. Vote YES on E.

Prop F: Water and Environmental Plan. NO

Leave Hetch Hetchy alone! Vote No on F. (See previous B.A.R. editorial: tinyurl.com/8dl7kxx.)

Prop G: Policy Opposing Corporate Personhood. YES

We're not big fans of local policy measures on matters completely out of the control of municipalities. It just gives our detractors another example to hold up to try to prove their point that San Francisco is out of touch with the rest of America. Nevertheless, we find GOP presidential candidate Mitt Romney's statement that "corporations are people too," coupled with the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United*, so odious that we have no difficulty supporting Super John Avalos's measure. Vote YES on G. ▼

State ballot measures

Prop 30: Sales and Income Tax Increase Initiative. YES
(See previous B.A.R. editorial, tinyurl.com/97s4ve8.)

Prop 31: Two Year State Budget Cycle and Government Performance and Accountability Act: NO

While establishing a two-year budget cycle has some advantages, this proposition meddles far too much in allowing local governments to ignore state mandated programs such as state environmental requirements. Further, it locks California into permanent underfunding of education, health, and other vital services. This is much too complicated a subject to address with an initiative constitutional amendment.

Prop 32: Special Exemptions Act. NO

This is an anti-labor measure concocted by southern California conservatives under the guise of campaign finance reform. It promises political reform but is really an effort by special interest groups to weaken the role of unions in participating in the political process while allowing corporations virtually unlimited freedom to contribute as they wish. This does not even begin to fix the problem of money in politics.

Prop 33: Automobile Insurance Industry Pricing Act. NO

While purporting to save drivers money, this initiative statute really gives insurance companies virtually unlimited authority to hike rates. It

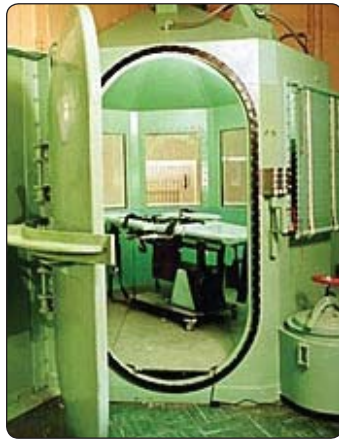
is funded by Mercury Insurance billionaire George Joseph, who has put up \$8.2 million for the measure. He funded a similar measure that was defeated in the last election, and this one should be too.

Prop 34: California Death Penalty Repeal Act. YES

This proposition would end the death penalty in California and replace it with life without possibility of parole. It would apply to the some 720 inmates currently on death row. It pits a coalition of justice groups against a campaign headed by law enforcement groups. It costs state and county governments collectively between \$100 million to \$130 million annually to pay for the costs of death penalty trials, appeals, and corrections, savings that would be allocated to pay for increased investigation of unsolved rape and murder cases. Improved investigation analyses and more sophisticated DNA testing have shown, not infrequently, that innocent people do get executed. This practice is below the dignity of a civilized society. It is time to repeal the death penalty.

Prop 35: Increased Penalties for Human Trafficking Act. NO

How can anyone be against a law to increase penalties for human trafficking? We are, because this proposition is not necessary and has too many bad provisions. State law already covers the subject thoroughly. If the state legislature feels the penalties are insufficient, they can certainly increase them, and it is unlikely anyone would object. In fact, state Sena-



Executions in California were carried out in the gas chamber at San Quentin State Prison; Proposition 34 on the November ballot would repeal the death penalty.

tor Mark Leno (D-San Francisco) successfully stewarded a bill through this current session of the legislature that made needed changes to current human trafficking law as it relates to minors. This proposition is an abuse of the initiative process. The proposition makes no provision for funding, which will certainly be in the tens of millions of dollars annually. It also contains numerous provisions that seriously invade privacy and would have lifelong effects on those caught in its web. We are sensitive to the issue, because it wasn't that long ago that gay men were arrested and forced to register as sex offenders for offenses as minor as public urination. Under this proposition, they would lose all personal privacy for life. It is bad policy.

Prop 36: Three Strikes Law Modification. YES

This is a common sense modification of the "three strikes and you're out" law. This measure provides that a life sentence on the third strike could be imposed only for a serious or violent felony. Currently, untold numbers of inmates whose third strike was for non-violent drug possession are serving life sentences. This is a waste of money. Our priorities as a society are backward when we spend increasing amounts of money on incarceration and less and less on education. This modification would save from \$70 million to \$90 million annually in prison- and parole-related costs, money which would be much better spent elsewhere.

Prop 37: Labeling of Genetically Engineered Foods. YES

Largely funded by out of state national food firms and organic advocates, this proposition requires labeling of food made from plants or animals with genetically engineered material. Prohibited in many countries (e.g. France), no one really knows the health risks of genetically engineered food. This is a transparency measure, which will allow the consumer to make an informed decision. It would be the first such measure of its kind in the United States.

Prop 38: Munger Initiative. NO

(See previous B.A.R. editorial, tinyurl.com/97s4ve8.)

Prop 39: Income Tax Increase for Multistate Businesses. NO

Businesses. NO

Current tax law permits multi-state businesses doing business in California to calculate their tax liability under different formulae. Of course, they will choose the formula most advantageous to them. This proposition changes the law to require that multistate businesses calculate their taxes based on sales made in California regardless of where they are based. We agree that this is a loophole in the state tax code that should be eliminated. However, this proposition then mandates that the increased revenue, estimated at up to \$1 billion annually, be earmarked for specific energy and education programs. This is ballot box budgeting, and we oppose it. It is the role of the legislature to determine the most effective use of revenues, particularly in these hard times of competing priorities. This is a loophole that needs to be closed, but this proposition brings too much other baggage.

Prop 40: Referendum on Redistricting. YES

This is a sour grapes attempt by unhappy Republicans to throw out the district lines for the state Senate that were drawn by the independent Citizens Redistricting Commission and upheld by the California Supreme Court. Since 2008 California voters have voted three times to have legislative and congressional boundaries determined by an independent commission. This will be the fourth election on the matter in four years. Enough is enough. A YES vote affirms the boundaries drawn by the Citizens Redistricting Commission. ▼

Leave Hetch Hetchy alone

Proposition F mandates the City and County of San Francisco develop a plan to accomplish two goals: the first is to create a more sustainable water system by adopting 21st century efficiency practices such as waste filtration, water recycling, water reclamation, conservation, better storm water capture, and other best practices. So far, so good. Everyone supports water conservation and renewable energy. And for over a decade, the city has worked intensely to upgrade San Francisco's water system. (More on that later.) It's the second goal of the plan that should make Prop F dead on arrival: eliminating the Hetch Hetchy reservoir and returning the Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park to the National Park Service to be restored.

This is not a new fight. As Matthew S. Bajko points out in his August 23 article in the Bay Area Reporter, it dates back a century following the 1906 earthquake, when, in 1913, Congress enacted the Raker Act, permitting San Francisco to construct a dam in Yosemite National Park's Hetch Hetchy Valley creating a reservoir that would eventually supply water to 2.6 million people in over 30 cities across the Bay Area. It was the losing efforts by environmentalists at the time, led by noted conservationist John Muir, that would launch the modern environmental movement. It was the catalyst for the creation of the Sierra Club.

No one doubts that such a project would never be permitted today. We have evolved tremendously in our environmental sensibilities and our respect for nature. But the Hetch Hetchy reservoir is almost 110 years

old now. It has created an entirely new ecosystem, the destruction of which would itself create enormous environmental damage. And it wouldn't bring back the Hetch Hetchy Valley of a century ago.

Hetch Hetchy Reservoir collects and stores pristine snowmelt in a granite basin within the protected Yosemite National Park. The water is fed principally from the Tuolumne River. It is distributed to San Francisco and other areas essentially by gravity, which is itself environmentally sound and cost efficient. Prop F supporters suggest that the water could be collected in other existing reservoirs along the river path or in new ones to be constructed. While San Francisco has legal rights to use Tuolumne River water, we do not have the right to control the distribution of the water once it reaches other capture facilities. We would likely have to buy the water, if it were available, water that would not be as pure as the water directly from the Hetch Hetchy. This would then require expensive filtering and likely require pumping to its final destination, also expensive propositions. Finally, years of drought have shown us that we need the water storage provided by the Hetch Hetchy reservoir. Often there is not sufficient rain or snowmelt to meet our needs and Hetch Hetchy provides a reliable source of water that would be folly to give up.

In addition to providing a needed and reliable source of water, the Hetch Hetchy project generates 1.7 billion kilowatt hours of hydroelectricity each year. This is 100 percent greenhouse gas-free energy and sufficient to meet all of



Rick Gerharter

Hetch Hetchy Dam in Yosemite National Park in 2008.

San Francisco's municipal power requirements for such facilities as San Francisco International Airport, San Francisco General Hospital as well as Laguna Honda Hospital, the San Francisco Unified School District and City College, the Municipal Transportation Agency, police and fire facilities, and more than 40,000 streetlights and traffic signals. Loss of hydropower sales and increased energy expenditures would cost city taxpayers at least an additional \$41 million annually.

Prop F supporters claim this is just a plan to study the restoration of the Hetch Hetchy Valley, although it mandates the city attorney to draft a charter amendment to be submitted to the voters no later than 2015 to implement the plan. As this is not a new idea, numerous completed stud-

ies have been done over the years, and they all found that removing Hetch Hetchy reservoir would have significant negative impacts on the operation of San Francisco's water and power system. First consider the costs. An independent study by the State of California Department of Water Resources in collaboration with the State Department of Parks and Recreation was completed in 2006. They concluded that a restoration project, while "technically feasible" was not "financially feasible." They estimated that a thorough analysis of all of the aspects of such a project would, itself, cost around \$65 million. Eight million dollars is the amount proposed in Prop F, not nearly sufficient to study the totality of the ramifications of such a project. The 2006 study also concluded that the range of

costs associated with a restoration project would be a minimum of \$3 billion to a high of \$10 billion. The lower figure would likely only be relevant if the O'Shaughnessy dam, which creates the Hetch Hetchy reservoir, were not torn down. And it is clear from talking to proponents of Prop F that tearing down O'Shaughnessy dam is a priority. The implementation of such a restoration project would also have significant impact on city residents in the form of higher water rates. The 2006 study estimates that, depending on the scope of the project, the average customer would pay \$709 to \$2,777 more each year.

Prop F supporters are trying to focus the debate on the requirement that the city increase its conservation efforts in capturing, filtering, and reusing ground water collected locally. Everyone supports energy and water efficiency, including San Francisco's political leadership. In 2002, under the leadership of Susan Leal, gay head of San Francisco's Public Utility Commission, the city and the voters adopted a \$4.5 billion plan to upgrade and modernize San Francisco's ageing water system. The plan is to be implemented in phases and extends out to 2035. San Francisco has been in the forefront of developing clean and efficient alternative energy, whether it be waste diversion or water efficiency. The pure water provided from Hetch Hetchy and delivered to San Francisco and the region in an energy efficient and greenhouse gas-free way is a critical component of that long range plan.

Leave Hetch Hetchy alone. Vote No on F. ▼