

*Proposition B: Permanency of Strong-Mayor Form of Government, Addition of Ninth Council District, Veto Override*

**Board Recommendation:**

**SUPPORT**

**Rationale:**

This measure will allow voters to decide whether or not the City of San Diego shall continue with the Strong Mayor form of governance at the end of the trial period in the year 2010, as Proposition F (passed by voters in 2004) intended. If voters decide to keep Strong Mayor in place, a ninth Council district will be implemented in addition to a true two-thirds requirement to override a Mayoral veto. A true Mayoral veto and override process provides a necessary check and balance of legislative authority. The Charter Review Committee correctly characterizes the current situation as “merely a requirement that the Council reconsider policies the Mayor finds objectionable”.

**Background:**

On January 22, 2007, Mayor Jerry Sanders commissioned the San Diego Charter Review Committee, with the goal of developing recommendations for the City Council to consider for a 2008 ballot. The Committee focused on “what it determined were the most urgent issues, studied others that for one reason or another were better left for a future ballot, and deferred others which it concluded should be left to a future Charter Review.”<sup>1</sup> The final report issued 11 recommendations to be placed on the ballot in 2008.

On November 7, 2007, the Committee presented its final report to the City of San Diego Rules Committee. The Committee accepted the report and asked that all recommendations be referred to the City Council with a detailed summary of comments made by members of the Rules Committee. The Committee also directed that recommendations related to the Chief Financial Officer, Auditor and Audit Committee be reviewed by the Audit Committee and that the Budget Committee review the recommendation regarding a balanced budget.

On January 14, 2008, the City Council voted to place the following measure on the June 3, 2008 ballot.

**Proposal:**

The question that will be put before voters will read:

“Shall the Charter be amended to require the City Council to submit to voters at the June 2010 election Charter amendments making the Strong Mayor form of government permanent: adding a Council seat; and, when the ninth seat is

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<sup>1</sup> 2007 San Diego Charter Review Committee Final Report. October 4, 2007.

filled, increasing the Council votes required to override a mayoral veto?”

If the Strong Mayor form of government is made permanent, a ninth Council seat will be added in the year 2012, following the completion of the 2010 census and the completion of the redistricting process in 2011.

As well, the permanency of the Strong Mayor form of government will initiate the increase in the veto override to two-thirds in 2012 to coincide with the addition of the ninth Council seat. If the Strong Mayor proposal is defeated in June 2010, the veto override will not increase to a two-thirds supermajority.

**Board Adopted Recommendation:**

On September 21, 2007, the San Diego County Taxpayers Association Board of Directors recommended to the City Council an expansion of the Council with three new at-large representatives, for a total of 11 members. The Board also recommended the requirement of seven votes (63.6%) to override a mayoral veto.

The Board also recommended that the Strong Mayor form of government continue past the 2010 sunset date.

**Charter Review Committee Recommendation:**

The Charter Review Committee recommended an expansion from eight to eleven Council districts, with redistricting to add the three districts occur as soon as practicable. In regards to the Mayoral veto override, the committee recommended the requirement of a two-thirds Council majority vote to override a Mayoral veto. In addition, if an ordinance or resolution requires a two-thirds Council majority to pass, then the Council would need one vote more than was necessary to pass the resolution or ordinance to override a Mayoral veto. Finally, the Committee recommended the extension of the trial period to December 31, 2014, at which point the Strong Mayor form of governance will be made permanent, unless voters approve a ballot measure to extend, shorten or repeal the effective period.