

Taxi Commission



PROPOSITION D

Shall the City create a Taxi Commission to regulate taxicabs?

YES 
NO 

Digest

by Ballot Simplification Committee

THE WAY IT IS NOW: Taxicabs and other motor vehicles for hire are regulated by the Police Department and the Police Commission. The Police Commission issues permits. The Police Department enforces laws governing taxicabs, processes applications, conducts inspections, investigates complaints, and adopts rules for taxicab companies and drivers. The Police Department also collects permit fees to cover the cost of these activities.

THE PROPOSAL: Proposition D is a Charter amendment that would create a seven-member Taxi Commission. Beginning March 1, 1999, this Commission would take over the powers and duties relating to taxicabs and other motor vehicles for hire now given to the Police Commission and the Police Department. The Police Department would continue to enforce criminal laws covering taxicab companies and drivers. Permit fees would pay for the operating costs of the Taxi Commission and its staff.

The Taxi Commission members would be appointed by the Mayor and would include:

- a person from the senior or disabled communities;
- a driver who does not hold a taxicab medallion;
- a manager in a taxicab company (who could be either a permit-holder or a company representative);
- a person from the hospitality industry;
- a person from the labor community;
- a person from the neighborhoods; and
- a person from the general public.

The commissioners would serve for two-year terms, and could only be removed for cause.

A YES VOTE MEANS: If you vote yes, you want to create this Taxi Commission to regulate taxicabs in the City.

A NO VOTE MEANS: If you vote no, you do not want to create this Taxi Commission.

Controller's Statement on "D"

City Controller Edward Harrington has issued the following statement on the fiscal impact of Proposition D:

Should the proposed charter amendment be approved by the voters, in my opinion, it would not, in and of itself increase the cost of government.

Creation of a new commission and implementation of regulations governing taxi cabs and other motor vehicles for hire might result in the transfer of functions and personnel from the Police Department to the new Taxi Commission or costs could be increased in indeterminable, but probably not significant, amounts to adequately staff the new commission.

How Supervisors Voted on "D"

On July 6, 1998 the Board of Supervisors voted 10-0 to place Proposition D on the ballot.

The Supervisors voted as follows:

Yes: Supervisors Ammiano, Bierman, Brown, Katz, Kaufman, Leno, Medina, Newsom, Teng, Yee

No: None of the Supervisors voted no.

Absent: Supervisor Yaki

THIS MEASURE REQUIRES 50%+1 AFFIRMATIVE VOTES TO PASS.

ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST THIS MEASURE IMMEDIATELY FOLLOW THIS PAGE. THE FULL TEXT BEGINS ON PAGE 85
SOME OF THE WORDS USED IN THE BALLOT DIGEST ARE EXPLAINED ON PAGE 50



Taxi Commission

PROPONENT'S ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF PROPOSITION D

Complaints about lack of taxi service have too long been the rule and not the exception.

Recently the San Francisco Police Commission took a major step in reforming taxi service by giving neighborhood residents what they have been advocating for: increasing the number of cabs.

The Police Commission has not been able to focus its undivided attention on taxi problems because it is the policy-making body for the Police Department. By default, the Police Department has had to deal with policy questions and administrative duties, thus rendering it incapable of providing solutions and enforcement that the public deserves.

The complex nature of taxi service necessitates ongoing attention from experts within the various categories of drivers, customers, and the industry. Our present system has led San Francisco to convene a mayoral appointed task force each time we reach a critical point in the degeneration of the industry - approximately every decade. This results in big problems requiring immediate changes. Most affected by this lack of planning are those in outer neighborhoods, seniors and the disabled, who desperately require improved, enhanced and expanded taxi service.

Proposition D will create an appointed Taxi Commission required to include representatives from: the senior or disabled

community; the neighborhoods; the labor community, hospitality; the general public; a driver; and a cab company.

The new Taxi Commission would consolidate all responsibilities and duties relating to taxicabs and other vehicles for hire which are now inefficiently dispersed throughout the City bureaucracy. The Police Department would continue to enforce criminal laws relating to taxis.

Transit users including taxi riders in every neighborhood will be better served by an accountable Taxi Commission that represents a diverse cross section of those who rely on better, safer taxi service in San Francisco. Improve taxi service: vote yes on Proposition D.

Board of Supervisors

How Supervisors Voted to Submit this Argument

The Supervisors voted as follows on August 17, 1998:

Yes: Supervisors Ammiano, Bierman, Brown, Katz, Kaufman, Leno, Medina, Newsom, Yaki, Yee

No: None of the Supervisors voted no.

Absent: Supervisor Teng.

REBUTTAL TO PROPONENT'S ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF PROPOSITION D

How many times have you or a friend had problems getting a taxi in a *neighborhood* in San Francisco? *And just try to get a taxi when it rains!*

For years City Hall has *already* controlled taxis through a Commission, and the result?

- Poor neighborhood service
- High prices

What's City Hall's answer? *A new Commission! Yea, right. Yada, Yada, Yada.*

WHO ARE THESE COMMISSIONS PACKED WITH?

- Corporate Welfare Recipients
- The Well Connected Lobbyists and their friends
- Friends of Willie.

No one is clamoring for a new commission. In the last 15 YEARS, this industry has had only a single *minor increase* in the number of taxis on the streets and only a *single fare increase!* Hardly the burning candidate for a new Commission that meets weekly and comes with a major new bureaucracy!

- Give us a break.
- Take a stand for people power.
- Tell the Corporate Welfare types, the Well Connected and the Special Interest Groups - 'Forget It!'
- There is no reason to change it now.
- We need any surplus money spent on the bureaucracy for our deteriorating schools.
- For more information on Proposition D see: <http://www.degrees.com/sfra>
- Our groups fights for good, clean government and fiscal responsibility. In San Francisco, that's a full time job. *Join us!*
- We need you!

The San Francisco Republican Assembly
<http://www.degrees.com/sfra>
sfra@iname.com
415-334-3151

The Common Sense Supper Club
supperclub@mailexcite.com

Adam Sparks
Candidate for School Board

Dr. Terence Faulkner

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Taxi Commission



OPPONENT'S ARGUMENT AGAINST PROPOSITION D

No, No, No!

- We don't need more bureaucracy.
- We need more taxis.
- Say, no to more Willie "patronage" jobs.
- This boondoggle will be expensive.
- We need the money for our schools!
- Our group fights for: common sense, honest government, individual responsibility and fiscal accountability. If you would like join us or get information about our group: (415) 334-3151.

San Francisco Republican Assembly

and

Adam Sparks

Candidate for SF School Board

REBUTTAL TO OPPONENT'S ARGUMENT AGAINST PROPOSITION D

The present system for maintaining a reliable taxi service obviously does not work. Everyone fears change. Yet, improvement, by definition, is a change . . . for the better.

Seven Taxi Commissioners will be appointed by the Mayor, just as Police Commissioners are currently appointed, with one notable difference. Unlike the Police Commission, composed of persons who have no particular knowledge of taxi issues, the **Taxi Commissioners must be chosen from the groups most knowledgeable about taxis, including: seniors, the disabled, drivers, taxi companies, neighborhoods, the riding public, labor, and the hospitality industry.** Every effort was made to ensure a fair representation and experts in every aspect of taxi service in San Francisco. Further unlike the Police Commission, the Taxi Commission will not have to divide its attention among other time consuming and crucial matters, but **will focus solely on improving taxi service.**

For the first time, the Police Department will be relieved of its administrative and policy obligations and free to provide the full enforcement power that this complex and expanding industry has long been lacking.

Having a Taxi Commission does not add to bureaucracy, but, rather, will simplify it by making the Commission the sole server for all consumer questions, suggestions, policy-making and regulation.

This Taxi Commission will pay for itself with existing and future permit fees.

San Franciscans from every neighborhood deserve taxi reform. For better taxi service, decisions made by a democratic process, and creation of accountable taxi oversight, vote yes on Proposition D!

Board of Supervisors

How Supervisors Voted to Submit this Rebuttal

The Supervisors voted as follows on August 24, 1998:

Yes: Supervisors Ammiano, Bierman, Brown, Kaufman, Leno, Medina, Newsom, , Yaki Yee

No: None of the Supervisors voted no.

Absent: Supervisors Katz, Teng

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Taxi Commission

PAID ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF PROPOSITION D

Taxi Task Force Members and Chair Supervisor Gavin Newsom Support Proposition D -Taxi Reform

For years San Francisco voters have gone back and forth to the ballot in a piece-meal attempt to improve Taxi service. While everyone has fought expensive battles to change aspects of our local taxi system we have had the unique opportunity to participate in a task force that spent nearly a year in creating a plan to solve the complex problems faced by drivers, riders and businesses affecting every corner of San Francisco.

Proposition D is part of that solution. It is a seven member commission that includes a well-thought mix of people from every point of view – committed to improving taxi service for all of San Francisco. We have begun the process of reform and we need your help. Join us along with the San Francisco Democratic Party, FDR Democratic Club for Seniors and People with Disabilities, members of the Taxi Task Force and citizens from every San Francisco neighborhood in voting Yes on Proposition D.

Supervisor Gavin Newsom

Joyce Lieberman, Taxi Task Force Member

Kathleen Harrington, Taxi Task Force Member

Berhane Assefa, Taxi Driver

*For identification purposes only

The true source of funds used for the printing fee of this argument was the San Franciscans for Better Taxi Service, Yes on D.

The Golden Gate Restaurant Association Supports Proposition D

The Golden Gate Restaurant Association, an association representing more than 450 San Francisco restaurants, supports approval of a Taxi Commission. The Taxi Commission will consolidate taxi industry regulation in one Commission that oversees only taxi-related issues. Regulation of the taxi industry has been disjointed and unfair, resulting in an industry that does not provide enough cabs to cover the huge unmet demand at all times of the day and night. San Francisco's residents, visitors, hotels, restaurants, seniors, the disabled and outlying neighborhoods are not provided with the taxi service they need and deserve. **We need hundreds of more cabs on the street to improve service for all of these groups.** The public is united in its demand for hundreds of more cabs now!

Our members urge you to vote yes on Proposition D!

The Golden Gate Restaurant Association

The true source of funds used for the printing fee of this argument was The Golden Gate Restaurant Association PAC.

Seniors – Disabled – Outer Neighborhoods Agree We need a Taxi Commission

Proposition D will provide more taxis and better service particularly to those who live in outer neighborhoods, or rely on cabs like seniors and the disabled. We support a commission that will include representatives from our communities and will guarantee real transportation options for the elderly and the disabled.

Proposition D will allow all interested persons the opportunity to work together to create better taxi service for San Francisco. Join seniors, the disabled and neighborhood residents in voting Yes on Proposition D.

*Jim Herlihy, Chair, Lakeside Neighbors**

August Longo, President, FDR Democratic Club for Persons with Disabilities and Seniors

Robert Pender, President, San Francisco Tenants Network

Affordable Housing Alliance

*Carole S. Cullum, Alice B. Toklas Lesbian & Gay Democratic Club**

*For identification purposes only

The true source of funds used for the printing fee of this argument was the San Franciscans for Better Taxi Service, Yes on D.

Law Enforcement Supports Taxi Commission

Proposition D creates a Taxi Commission that will focus exclusively on issues related to improving and monitoring taxi service throughout San Francisco. Currently taxis are regulated by the Police Commission and Police department which will continue to play a role in ensuring the safety of cabs.

The Taxi Commission will give taxi issues the attention they require and include representatives involved in every aspect of taxi service in San Francisco: seniors, the disabled, drivers, and the neighborhoods. Join us in voting Yes on Proposition D.

*Chris Cumie, President, San Francisco Police Officers' Association**

Wayne Friday, Former Police Commissioner

Juanita Owens, Former Police Commissioner

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Taxi Commission



PAID ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF PROPOSITION D

Working Together to Improve Taxi Service

San Francisco is experiencing an incredible expansion of tourism making crucial our need for improved transportation options. Proposition D creates a seven member Taxi Commission which will consist of representatives most involved and knowledgeable about Taxi issues. Business, labor, drivers, industry leaders, seniors, the disabled and neighborhood representatives will all be directly involved in the solutions necessary to expand and improve Taxi service throughout San Francisco.

We have voted for and against various measures over the years relating to taxis in San Francisco. This simple measure will help us resolve ongoing problems with all the stakeholders at the table. Join us in voting Yes.

Doris Ward, Assessor-Recorder of San Francisco

Marvin L. Warren, President, Polk District Merchant Association*

*For identification purposes only

The true source of funds used for the printing fee of this argument was the San Franciscans for Better Taxi Service, Yes on D.

The San Francisco Taxi Permit Holders and Drivers Association, Inc., (A.K.A. "K Owners' Association"), believes that the best way to steer the future of our cab industry is through ongoing positive communication among the interested parties. Let's end the era of political posturing and one-sided, doomed ballot measures, and set a table where we all can come face-to-face and work out our differences for the greatest good. Please help us work together to shape our future with the Taxi Commission. We are the people who will be paying for this Taxicab Commission, and we strongly urge you to Vote YES on D!

The true source of funds used for the printing fee of this argument was the San Francisco Taxi Permit Holders and Drivers Association INC.

Proposition D will insure a better regulated taxi industry. The Police Commission, which regulates taxis today, faces more critical issues. Just as we gave Parking and Traffic a dedicated commission in 1994, we need to do so for taxis.

Vote **YES** on Proposition D as another step towards balanced transportation planning in San Francisco.

James Chappell, President
San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association
(SPUR)

The true source of funds used for the printing fee of this argument was the San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association

Drivers Support Proposition D

Never before has decision-making within the industry included the voice of drivers. Proposition D will change this regrettable oversight by including both a driver and a labor representative, both intimately familiar with the day to day problems that drivers face. This commission will be able to focus on issues that are important to drivers, such as safety, dispatch service, and the quality of vehicles.

Support the people who work in the most dangerous profession of all by voting yes on Proposition D.

John F. Gallardo, Cab Driver

Joao Tristan Bettencourt, Taxi Driver

Julian M. Horowitz, Cab Driver

David Barlow, Cab Driver

Philip A. Anton, Driver, Manager, Regents Cab Co.*

*For identification purposes only

The true source of funds used for the printing fee of this argument was the San Franciscans for Better Taxi Service, Yes on D.

Vehicle hire permits are the property of the people of San Francisco, but the current system has not been responsive to the needs of our businesses, citizens, and neighborhoods. Creating a separate Taxi Commission will foster an accountability and visibility that will better serve the needs of our city.

To remain a world-class destination for tourists, conventions and trade shows, San Francisco needs improved taxicab service to attract the continued inflow of visitors' dollars to our local economy. In addition, San Francisco needs more taxis to better serve the needs of our senior citizens, the disabled, and neighborhoods like the Richmond and Sunset that lie outside of tourist areas. Putting more taxicabs on the streets, and the complexities of over-seeing other motor vehicles for hire such as limousines, will require a regulatory body with dedicated focus and accountability. I urge you to vote "yes" on Proposition D.

Mike Fitzgerald
Republican candidate, Assembly District 12

The true source of funds used for the printing fee of this argument was Fitzgerald for Assembly.

D

Taxi Commission

PAID ARGUMENTS

IN FAVOR OF PROPOSITION D

YES ON D. This new commission will resolve issues that for years have reduced taxi service and unfairly burdened drivers.

VOTE YES ON D!

San Francisco Tomorrow

The true source of funds used for the printing fee of this argument was the above signer.

AGAINST PROPOSITION D

For full, free discussion of Newsom-Brown taxi mangle, visit Web site "<http://www.cab.com>" and Usenet newsgroups "ba.politics,ba.transportation" — then advisedly vote **NO** on "D"!

Hal Womack 3-dan Nightshift

The true source of funds used for the printing fee of this argument was the above signer.

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TEXT OF PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENT PROPOSITION D

Describing and setting forth a proposal to the qualified electors of the City and County of San Francisco to amend the Charter of said city and county by adding Section 4.133, creating a Taxi Commission to succeed to the powers and responsibilities relating to motor vehicles for hire now vested in the Police Commission and the Police Department, and providing for recovery of costs.

The Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco hereby submits to the qualified electors of said city and county at an election to be held on November 3, 1998, a proposal to amend the Charter of said city and county by adding Section 4.133 to read as follows:

NOTE: All language is new.

Section 1. The San Francisco Charter is hereby amended, by adding Section 4.133, to read as follows:

SEC. 4.133. TAXI COMMISSION.

(a) The Taxi Commission shall consist of seven members, appointed by the Mayor. The appointments shall include a member from the senior or disabled communities, a driver who does not hold a taxicab medallion, a manager in a taxicab company (either a medallion holder or a company representative), a member from the

hospitality industry, a member from the labor community, a member from the neighborhoods, and a member of the general public not affiliated with any of the other enumerated categories.

Pursuant to Government Code Section 87103, individuals appointed to the Commission under this Section are intended to represent and further the interest of the particular industries, trades, or professions specified herein. Accordingly, it is found that for purposes of persons who hold such office, the specified industries, trades, or professions are tantamount to and constitute the public generally within the meaning of Government Code Section 87103.

The commissioners appointed to take office upon the effective date of this Charter section shall by lot classify their terms so that the terms of three of the commissioners shall expire at noon on the first anniversary of such date, and the terms of the remaining four commissioners shall expire at noon on the second anniversary of the effective date. On the expiration of these and successive terms of office, the appointments shall be made for two-year terms.

Members may be removed by the Mayor only pursuant to Section 15.105. Vacancies occurring in the offices of members, either during or at the expiration of a term, shall be filled by the Mayor.

(b) Effective March 1, 1999, the Commission shall succeed to all powers and responsibilities relating to taxicabs and other motor vehicles for hire, other than criminal enforcement, now vested in the Police Commission, the Police Department or the Chief of Police. The Taxi Commission may be assigned additional duties and functions by ordinance or pursuant to Section 4.132.

(c) All costs associated with the operations of the Taxi Commission, and such officers and employees as are necessary for the Commission to operate and administer the department and are authorized pursuant to the budgetary and fiscal provisions of the Charter, shall be recovered from permit, license and other fees charged to permit-holders, applicants, and other persons by the Commission. The Board of Supervisors shall set fees sufficient to offset the costs of the Commission's operations and any such officers and employees. Notwithstanding the above, the Board of Supervisors may continue to offer reduced fees to operators who participate in the City's Paratransit Program, and offset the reduction in revenues with a contribution from the General Fund.