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# Proposition F: Lowering the Voting Age

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## This Charter amendment

(<http://sfgov.org/elections/sites/default/files/Documents/candidates/Charter%20Amendment%20Legal%20Text.pdf>) would lower the minimum voting age to 16 for municipal and school elections in San Francisco. Voting for federal candidates (president and Congress), state offices and state ballot measures would remain at 18 years old.

The Board of Supervisors voted 9-2 to put this initiative on the ballot. Voting for: John Avalos, President London Breed, David Campos, Jane Kim, Eric Mar, Aaron Peskin, Katy Tang, Scott Wiener and Norman Yee. Voting against: Malia Cohen and Mark Farrell.

## Why is this on the ballot?

The proponents argue that lowering the voting age would help foster an informed and engaged electorate. And today it is more important than ever to increase voter turnout, given the intractability of the city's homelessness crisis and the factors that have enabled Donald Trump's presidential campaign to be so successful.

And if Proposition F passes, the city's Board of Education has committed to adjusting the public school curriculum "to ensure 16 and 17 year olds are prepared for their first elections," the proponents say.

But the measure's official opponent argues that, compared with adults, younger voters would be "less worldly-wise citizens who might in some cases back questionable or unwise-spending projects."



The San Francisco Department of Elections. Photo by Nadia Mishkin / San Francisco Public Press

## What would it do and at what cost?

To vote, a youth would have to be a U.S. citizen; a San Francisco resident; at least 16 on or before Election Day, and be registered with the San Francisco Department of Elections. Eligible voters could cast ballots in the following local races beginning in 2018:

- Mayor.
- Assessor-Recorder.
- City Attorney.
- District Attorney.
- Public Defender.
- Sheriff.
- Treasurer.
- Board of Supervisors.
- Board of Education, for the city's public school district.
- Community College District Board of Trustees.

They would also probably be allowed to vote for the proposed “public advocate” if Proposition H passes.

Additionally, the new voters would be able to vote on city ballot measures.

The city controller **estimated** (<http://sfgov.org/elections/sites/default/files/Documents/candidates/Controller%20Statement%20Prop%20F%20-%20Youth%20Voting%20in%20Local%20Elections.pdf>) that the number of registered voters for municipal elections could increase “by up to approximately 1 percent if 16 and 17 year olds register to vote at the same rate as the general population” — that would be about 4,100 new voters. Spread over four years, producing additional voter materials and conducting voter education and outreach would bring only a marginal increase in the Department of Elections’ annual expenses.

## Who officially proposed it?

Supervisors John Avalos, David Campos, Jane Kim, Eric Mar, Scott Wiener and Norman Yee co-sponsored the measure. The only supervisors who voted against putting it on the ballot were Mark Farrell and Malia Cohen.

The measure also has the support of the entire San Francisco Board of Education.

## Who opposes it and why?

Terence Faulkner, former chair of the San Francisco Republican Party.

## Vote threshold to pass

Simple majority — 50 percent plus one

## Effective date if passed

The 2018 elections.

## Follow the money

One committee is spending money in support of Proposition F: “Vote 16, Yes on Measure F, A Diverse Coalition to Expand Voting Rights.”

Follow the money at the San Francisco Ethics Commission: **all Proposition F filings** (<http://nf4.netfile.com/pub2/AllFilingsByMeasure.aspx?aid=sfo&id=160874580&measure=Measure+F+-+Youth+Voting+in+Local+Elections>).

## Endorsements: our methodology

The Public Press chose to count endorsements from organizations that backed multiple candidates or ballot measures, and that made those endorsements available online. We did not count endorsements from individuals.




Proposition F : .



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