

WORDS YOU NEED TO KNOW

By the Ballot Simplification Committee

ABSENTEE BALLOTS (RIGHTS OF VOTERS)-Absentee ballots are ballots that are mailed to voters, or given to voters in person at the Department of Elections. Absentee Ballots can be mailed back to the Department of Elections, deposited at the Department of Elections Office, or turned in at any San Francisco polling place.

BONDS (PROPOSITION F)-A bond is a promise by the City to pay back money borrowed, plus interest, by a specific date. If the City needs to raise a large amount of money to pay for a library, sewer line, school, or other project or program, it may borrow the money by selling bonds.

CHARTER AMENDMENT (PROPOSITIONS A, B, C, D, E)—The Charter is the City’s constitution. The Charter cannot be changed without a vote of the people.

COLA (COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT) (PROPOSITION B)—An amount added to an original pension to compensate for inflation.

GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS (PROPOSITION F)— These bonds are used to pay for large public projects that do not raise revenues. For example, these bonds have been used to construct museums, police stations, jails, libraries, and other public facilities. Normally, a two-thirds majority of the voters must approve the sale of general obligation bonds. If the

bonds are issued by a school district, they require a 55% majority vote for approval. General obligation bonds are repaid by property tax money.

ORDINANCE (PROPOSITION F, G)— A law of the City and County, which is passed by the Board of Supervisors, or passed by the voters in an election. Ordinances approved by the voters can only be changed by the voters.

PROPOSITION (PROPOSITIONS A THOROUGH G)—A Proposition is any Measure that has been submitted to voters for approval or disapproval.

QUALIFIED WRITE-IN CANDIDATES (RIGHT OF VOTERS)—A qualified write-in candidate is a person who has turned in the required papers and signatures to the Department of Education. Although the name of this person will not appear on the ballot, voters can vote for this person by writing the name of the person in the space on the ballot provided for the write-in votes. The Department of Elections counts write-in votes only for qualified write-in candidates.

RUNOFF (PROPOSITION A)— A final election to resolve an earlier election that did not produce a winner with more than 50% of the vote.