DATE: September 26, 2002

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Dr. Philip R. Day, Jr. Chancellor

SUBJECT: SPECIAL Support of Proposition 52, the Election Day Voter Registration (EDR) Proposition, also known as. Same-day Voter Registration. (Resolution No. 020926-S3)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

This measure allows eligible citizens, upon presenting proof of current residence, to register up to and including election day. Under current law, Californians who want to vote in an upcoming election must register with county election officials by the 15th day before the election. Under the measure, citizens registering on or after the 28th day before an election must do so at the county election office, or at a polling place on election day. Local election officials must provide a separate area and at least one trained staff member at each polling place for election day voter registration. Additionally, the Secretary of State must include information about election day voter registration as part of all voter education efforts.

Additionally, this measure establishes the “Election Day Registration Fund” within the State Treasury. Each year, approximately $6 million would be deposited into this fund from the state’s General Fund and distributed to counties for their costs of election day voter registration including hiring and training additional personnel, providing voter registration materials, and expanding voter outreach programs. Counties receiving money from the fund would be required to submit an annual report identifying their expenditures.

Furthermore, this measure increases the penalties for fraudulent registration or voting activity. It also creates a new crime of conspiracy of two or more people who commit specified election fraud, punishable by imprisonment in state prison.

The United States continues to have incredibly low levels of participation at the polls. For example, 51% of eligible voters voted in 2000, while in 1996 only 49% voted. About 50 million eligible Americans were not registered to vote in 2000. Those Americans are disproportionately people of color, young, and low-income Americans. These people are also disproportionately our students. Breaking down barriers to participation in all areas of public life is a mission of community colleges. Last year, City College of San Francisco made EDR part of their Legislative Priorities Package because of the positive impact that EDR will have for our students and our community.
Proposition 52, if passed, will make California the 7th state in the United States to have an EDR law. The other six states, Idaho, Maine, Minnesota, New Hampshire, Wisconsin, and Wyoming have significantly higher turnout than the national average. In the 1996 election when national turnout was a only 49%, EDR states' turnout was 57%. These states have consistently had turnouts of 8-15% above the national average. A 2001 study by Brians and Grofman suggests that voter turnout in an average state would increase by 7% if EDR were adopted.

RECOMMENDATION:

RESOLVED: That the Board of Trustees of City College of San Francisco support the passage of Proposition 52 on the November 2002 ballot.

Philip R. Day, Jr., Originator
Leslie P. Smith, Originator