

Article 34 Authorization for Municipally-Owned Social Housing

1. Please include any and all contact information for your ballot measure position.

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Co-authors and organizers:

SF Berniecrats Housing Committee, including:

Simone Manganeli

Laksh Bhasin

2. Briefly explain your position on this ballot initiative and why it should pass or fail this election cycle.

We support this ballot initiative because we are in the midst of a serious housing crisis that demands bold action. We need to create an infrastructure of deeply affordable, low-rent housing that allows working class people to remain in the city. This measure will authorize the city to create 10,000 units of affordable, municipally owned housing – a key first step in addressing homelessness and housing insecurity.

3. What would be the fiscal impact of this ballot measure if it passes?

No direct fiscal impact – the measure authorizes development of social housing but does not raise taxes or spend any funds. Funding for development of this housing is intended to come in part from a measure separately on the ballot for a real estate transfer tax, which would contribute towards a Social Housing Fund.

4. Who crafted this ballot measure, and how was it placed on the ballot?

The measure was introduced by Supervisor Dean Preston and will likely be placed on the ballot with the co-sponsorship of Supervisors Matt Haney, Shamann Walton, and Hillary Ronen. The legislation was written with the input of the co-authors and organizers listed above, and other advocates who have been taking community feedback on a program for municipal social housing over the past 3.5 years.

5. Who are your ballot measure position's principal consultants, and what are your main funding sources?

Currently the campaign is not retaining a consultant, however we are in discussion with Jim Stearns.

We have significant donation pledges from SF Berniecrats as well as individual Berniecrats members including the coauthors. We are hopeful DSA SF will also support this measure, which would allow us to raise additional funds from their membership.

6. Who are some of your ballot measure position's individual and organizational supporters?

Coalition on Homelessness

Compass Family Services

Gwendolyn Westbrook, Director of Mother Brown's* and United Council of Human Services*

John Avalos, Former District 11 Supervisor*

Myrna Melgar, Former President, San Francisco Planning Commission* and current candidate for District 7 Supervisor

Hope Williams, Co-chair of DSA San Francisco Electoral committee*

Emily Algire, Co-chair of DSA San Francisco Ecosocialist committee*

San Francisco Berniecrats

Progressive Democrats of America, San Francisco

Supervisors Preston, Ronen, Haney, Walton are co-sponsors

* Title or organization for identification purposes only

7. Why do you believe the Harvey Milk LGBTQ Club should support your ballot measure's position?

The Harvey Milk LGBTQ Club has a proud history of fighting for progressive change to make our city inclusive for all. The worsening housing crisis unfortunately threatens these values by excluding those unable to afford rising rents, particularly groups that continue to face discrimination. While the crisis affects everyone, it has disproportionately impacted people of color (and especially Black tenants), the working class, and the LGBTQ community. Within San Francisco's unhoused population, 27% of those living on the streets identify as LGBTQ. This measure is an important step to create a stable municipal housing infrastructure to prevent homelessness and provide affordable housing for no-to-low-income tenants.

Importantly, this measure overcomes a racist and classist obstacle in the California Constitution: Article 34. Passed by segregationists in 1950, Article 34 requires voter approval before even a single unit of municipal housing can be bought or built under a pilot program. Article 34 was designed specifically to keep out Black tenants and public housing residents from cities throughout California. This measure itself provides that voter approval we need to move forward, but Article 34 must be repealed at the statewide level, and we should educate voters about it.