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# Our City Update

Volume 2, Issue 2      Fall Election '06

## Recent Victories

### Health Care

This year, with your help, Our City helped generate public comments to the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors in support of Tom Ammiano's universal health care legislation. The measure was recently passed, and then signed into law by Mayor Newsom.

### Stopping Gentrification

We also lent a hand to the petition drive for a referendum to stop plans by the Redevelopment Agency to gentrify the Bayview-Hunters Point district, which would further drive the poor and people of color out of the City. The referendum received well over its needed 30,000 signatures, but was outrageously thrown out on a technicality by City Attorney Dennis Herrera. *(See report on page 3)*

### Housing Protections

On the June 2006 election ballot, Our City supported the successful local Proposition B, which now mandates that real estate agents clearly disclose the eviction histories of Tenancy In Common (TIC) housing, protecting tenants from unfair evictions, and also shielding TIC buyers from being tricked into buying low value lemon properties.

### Hotel Worker Contract

After two years of struggle, and support from hundreds of groups and public officials, hotel workers unionized under San Francisco's UNITE/HERE Local 2, have at last won a long term contract with decent health care, and with an end date that now allows workers to bargain nationwide for even stronger contracts.



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## Vote This Tue, Nov 7, For Paid Sick Leave & Vital Relocation Funds For Tenants In Forced Moves

### Local Prop F Ensures Paid Sick Leave For Workers - Vote YES on Prop F!

Now that the Board of Supervisors and Mayor have passed health care for all workers in San Francisco, it makes good sense for us to ensure that those workers can take paid sick days, so they can afford to leave work, to make use of that health care coverage.

Currently, there is no legal requirement for San Francisco's employers to provide paid sick days. Local Proposition F on this Tuesday's ballot, will guarantee that after three months on the job, San Francisco workers will receive 1 hour of paid sick leave for each 30 hours worked.

This leave time will also be available to be used by employees to care for sick or injured loved ones or dependents.

### Local Proposition H Provides More Relocation Funds For Tenants During Forced Moves - Vote YES on Prop H!

Because of the State's Ellis Act, landlords are allowed to evict some tenants without cause in order to pursue other uses of, or to upgrade, rental property.

San Francisco law provides that some funds be given to such tenants in order to make it more possible for them to relocate to new housing. But the amount of this compensation is very low and has not been raised in many years, even while rental and housing costs have skyrocketed.

Measure H at long last brings some relief to these tenants by raising the relocation funds to more fair levels.

*(See complete election tips on page 4)*



# Progress Toward A Free Public Internet

In December 2005, Our City began working to alert our supporters and public officials to sneaky maneuvers by Google and Earthlink corporations to win private control of San Francisco's new public internet communications network. Like the PG&E, AT&T and Comcast monopoly rip-offs of the past, this raw deal is bad for consumers and media democracy.

Since December, supporters like you have called and sent public comments to the Board of Supervisors and Mayor. That attention has begun to show some results. There have been several City Hall hearings seriously questioning the hasty Google/Earthlink deal. And a measure sponsored by Supervisor Jake McGoldrick has just passed the Board on an 8-3 vote, directing the City to do a comprehensive study on building high speed, free, and *publicly owned* internet.

A recent study commissioned by the nonprofit grassroots organization Media Alliance shows that the City could easily build a publicly owned system that would not only pay itself off in a mere 5 years, but would *also* gain an extra \$2 million per year in surpluses for at least ten years; funds which could be used to improve the system and make sure that the poor get full and equal access to it.

But Google and Earthlink are not giving up on their power grab, and they have helped host a series of 'neighborhood meetings' held to fool San Franciscans into thinking their corporate takeover will be a good deal. Let our Supervisors know that you aren't buying it, and you want free *publicly owned* internet.

**Email the Board of Supervisors at:  
[board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org](mailto:board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org)**

## Prop 85: Seriously Endangers The Lives Of Pregnant Teens

## Prop 90: A Grave Threat To Environmental & Community Protections



### Prop 85 Would Put Pregnant Teens In Danger!

This measure would force doctors to notify parents and then wait 48 hours before providing abortions to pregnant minors, placing young women with abusive or anti-choice parents in the potentially life threatening situation of choosing between family conflict and illegal abortion. **Vote NO on Prop 85!**

### Prop 90 Could Destroy California Environmental Laws And End Community Protections!

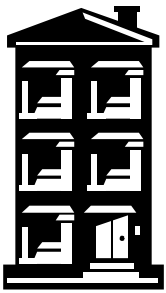
Following the great strides forward on environmental and social justice protections in the 60's and 70's, corporations and land owners have sought to strip many of these gains by using a clever twist on property laws known as 'takings' claims. Originally 'takings' law simply mandated that when a person's personal property was taken over by a City or State, (usually to build a public facility like a road or school) the property owner would receive just compensation for the loss of property.

But in the last few decades, corporations and developers have lobbied to pass various laws, and win court cases, that force governments to not *only* pay just compensation, but to also pay *all estimated future profits* that property owners can

argue they would have accumulated had they not been made to give up their property. For example, a home owner could ask for, not just the value of the home, but all future rents which that owner *might* have made from decades of renting out the property.

Takings law has also been used by corporate polluters to successfully kill regulations making them clean-up their toxic releases, or halt damaging land uses. They have argued that these laws are a 'taking' on their profits and that they deserve to be reimbursed by governments for all of the costs of the clean-ups, and to be paid all profits that they could have made using damaging chemicals and bad land uses. Court decisions based on such law have been strangling many national, state and community efforts to uphold environmental codes, because governments are afraid they will be sued for 'takings' if they enforce them. **Taken to its farthest extreme**, Prop 90 could be used by any property owner, business, or corporation to argue successfully that **all laws** affecting profits are takings!

If Prop 90 passes, it will enshrine such disastrous policy within our very State Constitution, potentially eliminating almost all environmental and civic protections! **Vote NO on Prop 90!** (See all of our election picks on page 4)



# Bayview Betrayed: City Attorney Herrera Denies The Will Of Over 33,000 San Francisco Voters

## Possible Gentrification And Mass Eviction In Bayview-Hunters Point Neighborhood

### The History: Eviction of Community And Vital Culture

Beginning in the 60's Redevelopment Agencies began a mass eviction of the poor and people of color from U.S. cities. San Francisco's Redevelopment Agency, in the name of getting rid of urban 'blight' tore down huge tracts of low income housing and replaced them with higher priced apartments and condos for the wealthy; enriching the pockets of profit driven real estate speculators. This devastated and made a *true* blight of the largely African American neighborhood in the Fillmore, which before had been the culturally beautiful jazz district in San Francisco; a vital part of San Francisco's character, and a major tourist draw.

Since those early days of Redevelopment assault, The city's African American population has been almost cut in half. People of color, the poor, and even the middle class, have been so hard hit in the past four decades by Redevelopment Agency and other pro-real estate speculator policies, that there has been a mass exodus from the city as housing costs have skyrocketed. The number of families with children that can afford to live in San Francisco has plummeted, leading to the threat of large scale neighborhood school closings.

Partly in response to the destruction of the Fillmore jazz district, many people of color have gathered into the strong and diverse community in the Bayview-Hunters Point neighborhood, which is now 40% African American. Recently, large influxes of Asian and other immigrants have also joined that Bayview-Hunters Point community, because of its more affordable housing base.

### Redevelopment Moves To Attack The Bayview-Hunters Point

Now the Redevelopment Agency has been given a green light to continue driving out cultural diversity and the poor from San Francisco. The Mayor and seven San Francisco Supervisors recently placed the Agency in charge of 1361 acres of the Bayview-Hunters Point neighborhood. (Only Supervisors Ammiano, Daly, Mirkarimi, and Sandoval voted against the plan.) San Francisco's African American population could well be decimated by this Redevelopment scheme.

### San Francisco Rises Up!

To face this threat, a petition drive was organized by leaders in the Bayview-Hunters Point calling for a vote to halt the Redevelopment plan. By the end of August 2006, campaigners had gathered well over the 30,000 signatures needed in order to ensure that the matter could be taken to San Francisco voters for a public decision. Activists and residents all over the city celebrated this as a great victory for protecting the diversity and character of the city.

### City Attorney Betrays The Bayview And San Francisco Voters

But unfortunately San Francisco's own city attorney, Dennis Herrera, decided democracy and the will of the voters could take a back seat to the plans and wishes of wealthy developers. In part due to requests from Supervisors Sophie Maxwell and Aaron Peskin, as well as Mayor Gavin Newsom, Herrera scoured the successful petition for reasons to invalidate it. In the end, he disqualified the signatures, claiming that for petition signers to be properly informed, the entirety of the Redevelopment Plan would have had to be presented alongside the petition. This means that every petitioner would have had to carry a huge, inches thick document with them, to show to potential signers. Such a requirement would have made the petitioning effectively impossible.

Bayview activists are planning a lawsuit against Attorney Herrera's decision. If that lawsuit does not prevail, the decision could end all future public petitions to halt redevelopment plans in California cities, and could kill other public petition drives as well. Be on the look-out for your chance to get involved!



# Our City Election Endorsements

## Board Of Supervisors Races

District 6 -

*Supervisor Chris Daly*

District 8 -

*Alix Rosenthal*

## Board of Education

*Jane Kim, Kimberly Knox, and Kim-Shree Maufas*

## Community College Board

*John Rizzo and Bruce Wolfe (no 3rd recommendation)*

## State Assembly District 12

*Barry Hermanson*

## Public Defender

*Jeff Adachi*

## State Ballot Measures

Prop 85 *NO!* Threatens Lives & Rights Of Pregnant Teens

Prop 87 *YES* Tax Oil Production To Favor Alternative Fuels

Prop 89 *YES* Public Funding Of Statewide Campaigns

Prop 90 *NO!!!* Destroys California Environmental Laws

## Local Ballot Measures

Prop A *YES* Critical School Funding

Prop B *YES* Officials Parenting May Meet Via Video

Prop C *YES* More Fair & Competitive Public Salaries

Prop D *YES* Limits Public Disclosure Of Personal Info

Prop E *YES* Strengthens Public Transit Funding

Prop F *YES!* Ensures Paid Sick Leave For Workers

Prop G *YES* Mandates Public Hearings On Chain Stores

Prop H *YES* Vital Funds For Tenants In Forced Moves

Prop I *YES* Mayor's Question Time With Supervisors

Prop J *YES* Calls For Impeachment Of Bush & Cheney

Prop K *YES* Calls For Protecting Senior/Disabled Housing



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