

GRAY PANTHERS OF SAN FRANCISCO

Gray Panthers October Meeting

Group Discussion:

Understanding Ballot Language & Discussion of November Measures

Tuesday, October 18, 1 PM

**Fireside Room, Unitarian Center
1187 Franklin (at Geary)**

Free, Public Invited, Wheelchairs OK

The first hour of this month's Gray Panthers meeting will be on deciphering the language on ballot measures. The second hour will be discussion to inform each other on City and State ballot measures in the November 8 election.

Wed, Oct 5, Gray Panthers Board:

1:00 PM, GP Office, 2940 16th St, Rm 200-3. **Please note location change.**

Wed, Oct 5, Gray Panthers Newsletter Meeting #1: 3 PM, GP Office, 2940 16th St, Rm 200-3, by 16th St. BART. (Right after the Board Meeting) **Please note the date, time, and location change.**

Tues, Oct 18, 1 PM, Gray Panther General Meeting (See above.)

Tues, Oct 18, 3 PM, SF Gray Panthers Newsletter Meeting #2: Fireside Room, Unitarian Center, 1187 Franklin (at Geary). (Right after General Meeting.)

Sat, Oct 22, Negro Spirituals Heritage Day, Honoring Paul Robeson: 2-4 PM, West Oakland Senior Center, 1724 Adeline St (at 18th St.) Oakland. Rides to be arranged. See page 3 for more info.

Mon, Oct 31, Gray Panthers Book Club: 11:30 AM, Celtic Café, 142 McAllister, betw Hyde & Leavenworth. Please call 415-931-1126 to confirm.

Thurs, Nov 3, Gray Panthers Remember Robeson Committee Meeting: 1:30 PM, GP Office, 2940 16th St, Rm 200-3. Please call 415-668-9572 to confirm.

October Membership Meeting

The first hour of this month's Gray Panthers meeting will be a group discussion on how to decipher the language and advertising on ballot measures. Please bring your own examples of language or advertising showing how some measures use deception, manipulation and lies to fool people into voting against their own interests.

The second hour will be discussion to inform each other on City and State ballot measures in the November 8 election. Gray Panthers is taking no official positions, but this issue of our Newsletter has articles by our members on various City measures to get the discussion started. Please bring us your thoughts and agreements or disagreements. Due to the large number of SF propositions, the Voter Guide will be out the 2nd week of October. It is online at <http://tinyurl.com/z4syetd>

Prop P: Blocks Affordable Housing Prop U: Re-defines "Affordable"

By Deetje Boler

Props P and U are realtor-sponsored propositions put on the ballot by a petition with 9,000 signatures from circulators paid by realtors. That's 5% of the total number of people who voted for Mayor in 2015, a record low turnout. P and U are opposed by all affordable housing advocates.

Under Prop P, the City could proceed with an affordable housing project on City-owned property only if the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development receives at least three proposals for the project. Selection could be on price alone. This realtor-sponsored legislation is likely to increase red tape and make it difficult to build affordable housing, according to the SF Council of Community Housing Organizations.

Prop U changes requirements for affordable rental housing in market-rate housing developments by increasing household income limits for eligible renters. Thus, poorer renters will be losing out to wealthier renters in the selection process in seeking housing. Since it sets the maximum allowable rent on the basis of a percent of the renter's income, a landlord would make more money by renting to higher-income applicants and would lead to evictions.. It applies retroactively to rental units built under the affordable housing program.

State Propositions

We are enclosing in this Newsletter a slate card with CARA's recommendations on most of the State proposition, and focusing on four State propositions that CARA considers vital to support

Gray Panthers is a member of CARA, the California Alliance for Retired Americans, and these recommendations on State Propositions were made by CARA's Legislative Committee and Board, both of which include representatives from Gray Panthers, Senior & Disability Action, and OWL-SF, as well as the SF Teachers Union and SEIU 1021, the union of most City workers.

CARA's four vital State Propositions to support:

- Prop 51 (Bonds to build, rehabilitate, and upgrade schools and community colleges.)
- Prop 55: (Continue the expiring Prop 30 Millionaire's tax to fund schools, social services, and health services.)
- Prop 59: (Formally instruct California legislators in Washington DC to support efforts to overturn *Citizens United*, which gives business almost unlimited influence.)
- Prop 61: (Limit drug prices for State-administered programs like Medi-Cal to Veterans Administration prices, which are about 60% of what most pay. It's a huge blow to PHARMA's exorbitant pricing; PHARMA is spending \$80+ million on lies to scare Californians from fighting back on drug prices.)

Prop V: Sugar Drink Tax

It is unfortunate that the opposition to V calls this a Grocery Tax. It is not. It is a straight tax on sugary drinks whether in syrup or powder form. It requires one cent per fluid ounce charge. Proceeds go to health and education, especially to children who are now experiencing high levels of associated diseases, such as diabetes. In Berkeley and Mexico these measures actually decreased sugar consumption. This is proof that these kinds of legislature remedies work.

Jill Stein, MD, of the Green Party, is co-author of *Environmental Threats to Healthy Aging*, on socio-economics, nutrition, toxics, fitness, in relation to diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular diseases. It's available at the SF Library on interlibrary loan.

Paul Robeson to be Honored By Friends of Negro Spirituals

Oakland's Friends of Negro Spirituals was created to preserve, celebrate, and improve the public awareness of Negro Spirituals, their origins and meanings, including how slaves used them for survival, protest, and community.

At the suggestion of Gray Panthers' Remember Robeson Committee, the Friends will honor Paul Robeson at their 2016 Negro Spirituals Heritage Day ceremony on Saturday, October 22 in West Oakland. **Gray Panthers are particularly invited.** Gray Panther friends and Labor Chorus members Harriet and Alex Bagwell will sing spirituals and other songs that Robeson sang in concerts. In addition, the event will honor Shannette Sulker, Emmitt A. Powell, and Carl L. Winters.

Anyone who has space to share in their car should call Barbara Lee at 415-668-9572.

**Negro Spirituals Heritage Day
Saturday, October 22, 2-4 PM
West Oakland Senior Center
1724 Adeline, at 18th Street
Map at <https://goo.gl/maps/vbTJwLTdvFo>
Or call 415-668-9572 for ride info.**

The Remember Robeson Committee

The Gray Panthers Remember Robeson Committee grew out of our search for ongoing projects and our awareness of the current and longstanding abuses of African-Americans' civil and human rights. One of our Committee member's musician father knew the Robeson family, another Committee member used to love her mother's playing LPs of Paul Robeson singing.

We searched the public library about this great American: his family, his education, his songs, his career as singer, actor, lawyer, civil and human rights activist, and promoter of world peace through song. Why was he pushed into obscurity? Why is his name missing from the Lorraine Motel's Civil Rights Museum or Detroit's African-American Museum?

We are the last generation to have sung his spirituals in school choirs or summer camps. As part of our effort to restore Robeson's name and voice to choirs and choruses, the Remember Robeson Committee plans to publish a book of the spirituals and songs he sang in concert all over the world.

Eviction Protest: No to Rent Gouging!

By Deetje Boler

How would you like to be hit with a 174% rent increase? That's what has happened to Kate Lust, a 22-year resident at 544 Clayton Street, who was recently notified that her rent was increased to \$8,500 from \$3,105: Pay or get out!

Dozens of members of tenants'-rights groups, including yours truly from the Gray Panthers, gathered on Sept. 30th at the office of the property manager Rob Link ("rob" is right!) of S&L Realty, at Geary and Spruce, to ask that the eviction be stopped, putting the rent back to its original amount -- or else resign as property manager.

The tenant Kate was there to deliver her check for October's rent, but he wasn't in and the door was locked. She spoke movingly to the gathering about the stress she's been under from the threat of homelessness and expressed deep gratitude for all the unexpected support. London Breed, District 5 Supervisor and President of the Board of Supervisors, and Dean Preston, District 5 candidate for Supervisor, were both there for this press conference and protest and, in turn with the activists, spoke in opposition to this outrageous rent increase. I, too, spoke briefly on behalf of the Gray Panthers, to comment that capitalism and democracy don't mix, as citizens' rights are trampled by the relentless profit motive, and to agree with the tenant Kate's idea that a City emergency be declared to stop all such rent-gouging evictions until the crisis of homelessness spilling out onto our streets is somehow resolved. She's afraid she may be added to the streets.

Concerned citizens are asked to call the manager, Rob Link, at 415-386-3111 and Lynn White, the owner, at 415-482-9777, to ask them to stop this eviction, letting them know that people are watching their shenanigans.

By the way: back in the 30's depression, neighbors put evicted tenants' belongings back into their places after the sheriffs departed. Just sayin'.

Prop I: The Dignity Fund

By Michael Lyon

Prop I guarantees funding and funding increases to the Dept of Aging and Adult Services, DAAS, which supplies most services to the City's growing population of seniors and adults with disabilities. We have had to struggle to avoid cuts every budget year. It is not a new tax, but a funding guarantee, a set-aside. We do need to be more aggressive in getting more revenue from business, but we need to assure our services, too.

Prop W: Free City College

By Michael Lyon

Prop W, a real estate transfer tax, raises the tax on very expensive residential and commercial properties (above \$5 million) when they exchange hands. It does not affect renters or owners' property taxes.

The revenue would fund the "Free City College" program, eliminating tuition and enrollment fees for all City residents, City workers, and those working in the City at least part time. Those low-income students presently receiving free tuition would get up to \$1000 to help them pay for books and transportation.

City College was free until 1983. Currently, CCSF charges \$46 per unit, totaling \$1,104 every year for full-time students. According to the 2015-2016 Student Expense Budget for CCSF, students pay more than \$1,700 for textbooks and supplies and roughly \$1,300 for transportation.

This plan will help counteract big drops in enrollment caused by years of sabotage by the Accreditation Agency and the State-imposed director.

The City Controller estimates that Prop W would raise \$45 million annually. Proposition W requires a simple majority to win. It is supported by Supes Kim, Campos, Peskin, Mar, Avalos, and Yee, as well as the Tenants Union, City College Teachers Union, Green Party, the Democratic Party, and many others.

The tax only affects buyers and sellers of properties valued at over \$5 million. Current transfer taxes are in the range of 2.0-2.5% and would increase by 0.25-0.50%. According to the SF Association of Realtors, 97% of the funds generated would come from properties worth \$25 million or more, which are almost all commercial buildings.

Prop G: Police Oversight

By Michael Lyon

Prop G would rename the current Office of Citizen Complaints as the Department of Police Accountability (DPA), giving it more power and independence from the Police Commission. It is unopposed.

The DPA would have to review the SFPD use-of-force policies and handle claims of police misconduct. It could review any SFPD policies or practices and determine what City records it must access to do its job, within limits of other law. The DPA would have its own budget, separate from the Police Commission. It would investigate ALL officer-involved shootings.

The Mayor would select the DPA Director from Police Commission nominees, subject to Board of Supervisors confirmation, unless Prop G (Public Advocate) passes and the Public Advocate replaces the Mayor in selecting the DPA Director.

Letter to Jeff Adachi

By Barbara Lee

Thank you, Jeff Adachi, for your talk at the U/U Open Forum Sunday Sept 18th. I had no idea that the one office of Public Defender represents 80% of people caught in the system, nor did I know that San Francisco's office of Public Defender is one of only a few in the USA which are elected by the people. Public Defenders only date back to 1963.

Only in 1961 when Gideon, convicted of a break-in of a pool hall, petitioned for his constitutional right to a lawyer and was proved innocent, was the office of Public Defender finally instituted. And I am relieved to hear that the effectiveness of your office is assured with the support of a social worker and several attorneys. In addition, there are Community legal clinics for dispute resolutions as well as a program to clear individual's records.

Your video named "America Needs a Racial Facial" is 8 minutes of reality. It proves your point that the justice system needs the accountability your office provides. The implicit biases of judges, juries and police are provoked under stress; mistakes are thus inevitable within the justice system. We social activists accept your acknowledgment of our place in effecting reforms.

J & K: Sales Tax for Homeless, Transit

By Denise D'Anne

Proposition J is a 25-year set-aside funding disability, homeless, and transportation improvement. According to Save Muni, a Muni ridership advocacy group, only 12.5% of the money will be allocated to the SF Municipal Transit Agency to actually improve Muni. Proposition K increases San Francisco's sales tax rate to 9.25% for the next 25 years. Its intent is to fund Prop J's services.

More and more budget decisions are set-asides, laws that guarantee funding for particular purposes. This increasing use of citizen votes to determine budget precedence takes away the flexibility that the Mayor and Board of Supervisors have as part of their job description. Ballot budgeting also deprives citizens of the ability to have a face-to-face discussion during the annual budget process.

California Law specifically prohibits more than one subject in a single ballot measure. Yet Prop J includes two distinctly different subjects: homeless and transit. Another State Law also requires tax measures to pass by a 2/3 vote. Both laws provide important and reasonable safeguards. Prop K is in violation because it requires only a majority plus one vote. Prop J is in violation because it includes two separate subjects in one ballot measure. This deceptive combination of measures plays on people's emotions based on their empathy for the homeless and to get around the 2/3 vote requirements for tax measures.

The city currently spends \$241 million on homeless services while homelessness has increased, according to the SF Chronicle, and is now 6,686 people. The Police Department has a budget of \$20 million just to move the homeless from one area of the City to another. That police money could be better spent on providing secure housing and services. Other cities provide immediate housing for the homeless that saves considerable amount of money and also stabilizes the lives of the homeless individuals.

Prop K's 25-year increase of the SF sales tax to 9.25% is regressive because it primarily affects low income and working class residents who spend the bulk of their income on taxable goods and services. Those below the poverty line still pay the taxes from their meager funds.

Prop O: Hunters Pt Office Development

By Michael Lyon

Prop O would give Lennar Urban Development's Candlestick Point/Hunters Point (CPHP) Project a permanent exemption from the annual City-wide limit on office development that was enacted in 1986 by Proposition M. Moreover, office development in the CPHP project would not be counted in the annual Prop M tally, so limits in office development for the rest of the City would not be reduced by CPHP office development.

Prop O would worsen the City's affordable housing crisis. Lennar is proposing 5 million square feet of CPHP office development, equal to 10 Transamerica Buildings, which would require 2,600 additional affordable housing units, according to City calculations. Lennar claims their CPHP project will create 3,359 affordable units, but 1,650 of those units are actually rebuilt public housing and 900 are above real affordability. Lennar's 5 million square foot plan is double what they put forward when voters approved the development in 2008.

Prop O would allow Lennar unlimited office development in the CPHP area, but would not provide the City any additional funds to pay for transit, water, and other infrastructure costs, nor would it provide any more job assurances for current CPHP residents.

By exempting Lennar from the 1985 Prop M City-wide annual office developments, Prop O would set a precedent encouraging all other developers to be exempted from the Prop M limits, accelerating gentrification, and displacement in San Francisco. It is opposed by all affordable housing groups and anti-displacement groups.

Props Q&R: Tents & Crime Units

By Michael Lyon

Supervisors Weiner, Farrell, Tang, and Cohen: when evictions, displacement, gentrification, rent gouging, and market-rate housing are illegal, perhaps then we should consider making camping on the sidewalks illegal and setting up neighborhood crime units to enforce it. Right now, 800 are on the shelter waitlist. After having your tent dismantled, you'd be offered one night in a shelter and then be turned out into the street again. Seriously?

Gray Panthers of SF

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Nonprofit Org.

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We believe ALL people are
entitled to certain fundamental
rights:

meaningful employment
economic security
decent and affordable housing
quality health care
a life of dignity from birth to
death free from fear and abuse
a world in peace



Age and Youth in Action

ADDRESS SERVICE
REQUESTED

Call the office for membership information.

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Non-Gray Panthers Actions and Events

(Complete on-line Calendar at <http://tinyurl.com/ce2gy6enb>)

Thurs, Oct 6, 12 PM, Kickoff Campaign for Prop W & Free City College: 1170 Market St (UN Plaza). See p. 4.

Tues, Oct 11, 11 AM, Senior & Disability Action's Health Action Team Meeting: ILRC, 825 Howard St.

Thurs, Oct 13, 10 AM, Senior & Disability Action General Meeting: Unitarian Center, 1187 Franklin.

Thurs, Oct 13, 1 PM, CARA SF CAT Meeting: ILWU Office, 1188 Franklin

Wed, Oct 19, 1 PM, Senior & Disability Action's Housing Collaborative Meeting: 4th Floor, 1360 Mission, near 10th St. Demand housing for all.

Wed, Oct 19, 6 PM, SF Living Wage Coalition Meeting: Rm 301, 2940 16th St, at Capp, 1 block from 16th St. BART

Sat, Oct 22, OWL-SF Meeting on Police Reform and Blue Ribbon Report : 10 AM, 555 Ellis (betw Hyde & Leavenworth)

Thurs-Sun, Oct 27-30 and Thurs, Nov 3: On The Hill: An original docudrama on the life and death of Alex Nieto and the impact of police brutality and gentrification on neighborhoods, presented by neighborhood youth and Loco Bloco. Locations: Nov 27-30, Brava Theater, 2781 24th St (at York); Nov 3, City College Mission Campus, 1125 Valencia (betw 22-23 St.) <http://tinyurl.com/j4ykko3>
Gray Panthers=Age and Youth Together!



The Senior Vote Matters in 2016!



Elections are decided by the people who show up at the polls.

With the growing number of seniors over 60 in California, you have tremendous political clout this election year. Yet there are seniors who repeatedly vote against their own interests, due to lack of information, being more isolated and often getting their information from television, radio and misleading mailers funded by big corporations and rich individuals.

That is why the California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA), California's largest, grassroots senior advocacy organization, created the **Senior Vote 2016 Project**. CARA represents almost 1 million seniors through our 260 affiliated organizations. We have studied all of the California Ballot measures, and have made recommendations on these initiatives to serve the interest of older people and our families. If you would like additional information, go to the CARA website at www.californiaalliance.org.

Please be sure to VOTE in this important election – on both the ballot measures and for the candidates for local, state, and national office that you believe will best represent your interests and the interests of seniors.

Thank You!

YES

ON PROP

51

Give All California Students a Chance for Success

PROP 51 IS A STATE SCHOOL BOND to address the backlog of school construction projects needed for all levels of education—kindergarten to community college. We are urging you to VOTE YES on PROP 51 – for the benefit of your children, grandchildren and future generations because schools with upgraded technology, labs, and libraries give all of our students the opportunity to receive a quality education that prepares them to compete in our global economy.

YES

ON PROP

55

Help California Children, Seniors, and Families Thrive

PROP 55 WOULD CONTINUE THE SUCCESS OF PROP 30 that requires the wealthiest of Californians making \$250,000 or more per year to pay their fair share of taxes. These taxes from the wealthy help to protect essential senior services like health services, home care, meal programs, and adult day health care as well as improving our public education system. Prop 55 also reduces our sales tax by 1/4 cent.

YES

ON PROP

59

Get Corporations out of Politics!

PROP 59 CALLS UPON CALIFORNIA'S CONGRESSIONAL MEMBERS to support a constitutional amendment to reverse the ruling of the Supreme Court in *Citizens United v Federal Elections Commission* which allows corporations and billionaires to influence and control the outcome of elections in our country.

YES

ON PROP


61

Reduce the Price of Prescription Drugs in California

PROP 61, THE CALIFORNIA DRUG RELIEF PRICE ACT, would require the State of California to pay NO MORE for prescription drugs than the U.S. Dept of Veterans Affairs. California provides the prescription drugs for 7 million Californians, many of them being seniors. Medicare and insurance companies should also be able to negotiate for lower drug prices from giant pharmaceutical companies thereby saving California taxpayers billions of dollars by lowering drug prices. Prop 61 is the first step.

NOVEMBER 2016 GENERAL ELECTION

CARA Recommendations on California Ballot Initiatives

YES PROP 51	Funding for K-12 School and Community College	YES PROP 59	Campaign Finance – Voter Instruction/ Overturn Citizens United
YES PROP 52	State Fees on Hospitals, Federal Medi-CAL Matching funds	No Recommendation PROP 60	Condoms for adult performers
NO PROP 53	Revenue Bonds require statewide voter approval	YES PROP 61	RX drug purchases by State at Veteran's Administration prices
NO PROP 54	Prohibit legislation unless in print published 72 hours in advance	YES PROP 62	Death penalty repeal
YES PROP 55	Tax Extension to fund Education and Health Care (Prop 30)	YES PROP 63	Guns/Ammo sales – prohibits large capacity magazines
YES PROP 56	Tobacco tax to fund Health Care, prevention, law enforcement	YES PROP 64	Legalization of marijuana and hemp. Establishes tax structure
YES PROP 57	Criminal Sentences, Juvenile proceedings and sentencing	NO PROP 65	Charges for Carry out bags
YES PROP 58	Repeal 227 (California Education for a Global Economy)	NO PROP 66	Procedures for death penalty cases – Pro death penalty
 <p>California Alliance for Retired Americans</p> <p>TAKE THIS TO THE POLLS!</p>		YES PROP 67	Ratify the ban on single-use plastic bags.



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