

Vote NO on Props N & R; YES on D & L

Continued From Page 1

Proposition E-Water and Sewer-No Position

Proposition E essentially lets the Supervisors do Proposition A without having to go to the voters. Therefore, it's dangerous. But, it could be an alternative to A since a defeat of Prop A would likely lead the Supervisors to reassess the rent increase in A as well as the billions going to suburban sprawl. With any luck the Supervisors would do a bond to do just seismic work and system upgrades without the increased capacity and without the rent increases. Or, they could just do Prop A...

Proposition F-Entertainment Commission-YES

This gives the newly formed entertainment commission the power and duties of licensing nightclubs, which currently the police do. This is mostly a bureaucratic task which will be more efficiently done by the commission rather than the police.

Proposition G-Elections Dept. Assistance-YES

God knows the Elections Department needs all the help it can get...This is a technical fix to a previous measure which sought to end the use of city employees in campaigns and clarifies that city workers, like the police, can transport ballot boxes or do other work necessary to make an election happen.

Proposition H-Police & Fire Benefits-YES

This measure increases the retirement benefits of Police and Fire Fighters. As the cost of living in San Francisco goes up the retirement benefits of our retired public employees must be periodically adjusted. This is funded entirely from the pension program and has no cost to the taxpayers (or affect on other services)

Proposition I-Paid Parental Leave-YES

Provides city employees with paid parental leave, for up to 12 weeks following the birth or adoption or foster-care acceptance of a child. It's sound policy which should be a right for everyone in the country.

Proposition J-Supe Salaries-No Position

Proposition K-Official City Newspaper-YES

Some years back the Supervisors "structured" the lucrative list of official newspapers for public notices so that the SF Independent would be the paper of choice. This is worth thousands and thousands of dollars and essentially keeps the Independent afloat. Unfortunately, it's become a public subsidy of an absurdly reactionary, right-wing and anti-tenant newspaper. Proposition K gets rid of the changes made to get the Independent this subsidy and will effectively take it off the list of official city publications. It will also reduce litter since eventually we will be free to walk down sidewalks without kicking aside the thousands of unread Independents.

Proposition L-Real Estate Transfer Tax-YES

This is long and sorely needed. This increases the transfer tax on properties worth over \$1,000,000 to the same level as in other Bay Area cities. The money it raise will help fund the Peoples' Budget-housing, health care and education. Even better, it's a progressive tax which-besides raising money by taxing the wealthy-penalizes real estate speculation. Now landlords like John Hickey Brokerage (evictor of Lola McKay) will get penalized for their MO of buying buildings, evicting tenants, and selling the then-empty buildings. Definitely Vote YES.

Proposition M-Economic Development-NO

A Willie Brown scam to give the downtown business and corporations more say in City Hall.

Proposition N-No Care, No Cash-NO NO NO

Gavin Newsom's transparent attempt to become Mayor by kicking people who are already down and out. People should not NO just on the principle of politicians (especially rich society babies like Newsom) trodding all over our most vulnerable people just for the sake of getting elected. Bit worse, Prop N will really hurt people. It cuts GA benefits to \$59 and, despite Newsom's lies, it provides absolutely no care at all. The problem is there's not enough affordable housing, or shelter beds or even run down hotels. People will get their benefits cut but then find there's no services. The measure especially penalizes families (cut off of welfare by Clinton's "reform.") and immigrants (who rely on GA because federal welfare programs are unavailable to immigrants. Vote NO.

Proposition O-Prop N Mitigation-YES

This is Sup. Ammiano's attempt to mitigate Prop N if it were to pass. Prop O says that before No can take effect, that the service (the "Care") actually have to be there! Prop O also will build 1,000 more units of affordable housing and create 700 more drug treatment slots.

Proposition P-Revenue Bond Oversight-NO

Another measure to setup a bond "oversight" committee. The problem with this Tony Hall measure is that this committee of un-elected members would have the power to stall or sabotage any bond which they didn't like. Vote NO,

Tenants Union Endorsements November 5, 2002 Election

San Francisco Candidates

Supervisors

District 2-Lynne Newhouse Segal • **District 4-Barry Hermanson**

District 6-Chris Daly • **District 8-Eileen Hansen**

Judge

Seat 10-Gail Dekreon

School Board (3 Seats Up-4 Endorsed)

Eddie Chin • **Dan Kelly** • **Whitney Leigh** • **Sarah Lipson**

Community College Board (3 Seats Up)

Lawrence Wong • **Abel Mouton**

Assessor

Doris Ward

San Francisco Initiatives

Proposition A (Water Bonds) No

Proposition B (Affordable Housing Bonds) Yes

Proposition C (Veterans Building Bonds) No

Proposition D (Public Power) Yes

Proposition E (Water & Sewer Fees) No Position

Proposition F (Entertainment Commission) Yes

Proposition G (Elections Dept. Assistance) Yes

Proposition H (Police & Fire Benefits) Yes

Proposition I (Parental Leave) Yes

Proposition J No Position

Proposition K (Official Newspaper) Yes

Proposition L (Real Estate Transfer Tax) Yes

Proposition M (Economic Development Office) No

Proposition N (Cut Benefits To Poor People) No No No

Proposition O (Mitigate Prop N) Yes

Proposition P (Bond Oversight Committee) No

Proposition R (Rent Control Repeal via Condo Conversions) NO NO NO

Proposition S (Medical Marijuana) Yes

State Initiatives

Proposition 46 (Affordable Housing Bond) Yes

Proposition 52 (Election Day Voter Registration) Yes

Proposition R-Condo Conversions and Rent Control Repeal-NO NO NO

This is the most anti-tenant and dangerous measure in years. It will convert half of the city's apartments to condominiums, removing rent control from each one in the process. It also enable apartment buildings of any size to be converted to condos. It will allow buildings to be converted to condos without selling a single unit to tenants. It's tenant "protections" are meaningless and unenforceable. It means evictions and rent increases for everyone. Save your home. Vote NO

Proposition S-Medical marijuana-YES

An advisory measure calling on San Francisco to explore growing and distributing marijuana for medical uses. Another good idea. Vote YES

State Initiatives

Proposition 46-Affordable Housing-YES

This is John Burton's statewide affordable housing bond which will provide \$2.1 billion for new affordable housing (both rental and ownership) as well as more emergency shelter. It addresses specific needs of farmworkers, seniors, veterans and people who are homeless. It will help San Francisco and all of the state. Vote YES

Proposition 42-Election Day Registration-YES

This measure will allow people to register to vote right up until election day. It will greatly improve democracy for poor people and tenants, both of which have poor voting records (tenants in San Francisco represent 2/3 of the people but less than half on election day). Vote Yes and you will enhance your tenants rights.

Candidates

Round Two of District Elections provides the opportunity to ratify the best District Supervisor-Chris Daly-and to increase the solid progressives from 7 to a veto-proof 8 (or even 9)

District 2-Lynn Newhouse Segal

Segal is taking on Gavin Newsom and tackling him head on on the issues of Prop N and Prop R. She solidly supports rent control (as opposed to Newsom who's against rent control) and she actually cares about people.

District 4-Barry Hermanson

Hermanson will have a tough time in District 4, possibly the most conservative district. But he has solid progressive backing and is absolutely pro-tenant. Especially impressive about Hermanson is that he's seeing running for Supervisor as a way to organize in his district (much as Daly has done) and he's building a progressive coalition in the Sunset. He's also using his campaign to talk about the important initiatives on the

November ballot-public power, condo conversions and homeless bashing.

District 6-Chris Daly

Daly is what district elections are all about. Representing a district which has mostly poor people and is over 80% tenants, Daly has brought poor people and tenants a voice in City Hall. he has shown compassion and passion and best of all has been very effective-all his tenant legislation has been passed into law (most recently, a comprehensive package of rent control reforms).

District 8-Eileen Hansen

Sup. Mark Leno was often a good tenant vote but also a moderate one who was able to get concessions for his all-important 8th vote (the number needed to override a Brown veto). Eileen Hansen, a longtime community activist with a strong record on tenants rights (she's walked precincts for laws which tenants now benefit from), came within a few votes of winning in District 8 last time. Her election will mean a solid 8 votes for progressives. Of her 2 opponents, Tom Radulovich would also be a pretty solid 8th vote but he lacks the long-time commitment which Hansen has. The 3rd opponent, Bevan Dufty, is a Mayoral lackey who will vote against tenants every time.

Judge

Judicial Seat 10-Gail Dekreon

Tenants are just starting to realize how biased against us the courts are. Recent years have seen a string of anti-tenant rulings which have chipped away at our rights. Tenants too often find judges just ignoring the law when it comes to evictions and overturning every ballot measure or law passed which helps tenants. The appointed judges are the worst and only by electing judges do we get ones who actually respect tenants and believe that we are not some sub-human species. Dekreon has a solid background in doing community law, working for poor people not against them. Her opponent is funded by landlords and the real estate industry.

School Board & Community College Board

While not a race which impacts tenants directly, the School Board & Community College Board often are the training camp for future Supervisors. The following candidates all have solid records on tenants rights and, on educational issues (like charter schools and in school commercialization), are equally solid.

School Board Community College Board

Eddie Chin	Abel Mouton
Dan Kelly	Lawrence Wong
Whitney Leigh	
Sarah Lipson	

Prop R Means Rent Control Repeal

What makes Prop R doubly dangerous is that it sets up rent control repeal for 85,000 apartments. In fact, Prop R will almost exclusively be used for rent controlled units and we'll see rent control repealed from about 80% of rent controlled apartments.

The anti-tenant Costa Hawkins laws enables this use for Prop R. In 1995, the state legislature rolled back rent control coverage across the state and removed rent control completely from rented condominiums and single family homes (in San Francisco that is currently about 25,000 rent controlled units). In 2000, Sen. Sheila Kuehl modified that a bit, saying rent control would be removed from condominiums only if the condo was no longer owned by the subdivider (i.e., the landlord who did the condo conversion).

That change, though, allows for landlords to "sell" all of the units as a package and to effectuate the rent control repeal. Landlords will thus convert a building to condominiums and then will "sell" the units to a sister corporation or partner in what is really a paper transaction. That transfer then removes rent control from the apartments.

The rent control repeal is permanent. Not only will the tenant living there lose their protection, it also means that all future rental will be without rent control. Losing rent control means that landlords are able to raise rents by absolutely any amount, at any time. And it means tenants can be evicted for no reason, or any reason at all.

Vote NO on R to save your rent control!

It's Bad For Buyers

Current law says buyers must be given inspection reports of roofs, foundations, plumbing, and electrical systems. Prop R is exempt from that safeguard and—worse—does not even let buyers make offers pending their own inspections. Prop R is also exempt from every other buyer-protection provision in the current condo law.

It's Unfair and Undemocratic

Apartment buildings will get converted even when 75% of the tenants oppose the conversion. Landlords can convert apartments under Prop R by convincing just 25% of tenants to "agree" to the conversion. The minority could decide to let San Francisco lose over 85,000 rental units, driving up rents for all.

It's Bad For Neighborhoods

Prop R lets landlords avoid current Building and Planning Codes which are designed to protect neighborhoods and residents. The Prop R exemptions allow these 3,400 new condos to avoid upgrading to modern seismic standards and to avoid Planning Commission and Neighborhood Review.

The Phony "Tenant Initiated Conversion" Process

The real estate industry has had it's sights set on the city's condo conversion law since the law was first passed in the early '80s. In particular, the law's current limits on the size of buildings which can be converted has been a target for groups such as the "Coalition For Better Housing" which represents the landlords of the city's very large apartment buildings.

The tactic which they keep trying to utilize is a so-called "tenant initiated conversion" which would then enable the condo conversions to happen virtually without any regulations or limits. HOPE is the third attempt in the past 11 years to try to gut the condo law via this "tenant initiated" process.

As with the others, HOPE utilizes this phony process to create a whole new avenue whereby landlords can convert apartments to condominiums without having to meet the standards and requirements of the existing law. This separate process allows for an additional 3,400 conversions per year, conversions of any size building, and exemption from virtually all of the planning and building codes which condominiums now fall under.

This separate process to access the 3,400 loosely regulated conversions is triggered by the landlord obtaining signatures from at least 25% of the tenants on non-binding "intent to purchase" forms.

This concept is actually landlord initiated and relies on easily obtained statements from tenants that the tenant would like to-if ever able-buy their apartment some day. Nonbinding, these are effectively meaningless forms which commit neither the tenant to buy nor the landlord to sell. Most tenants would sign them and in cases of stubborn tenants, cash payments for the signatures are allowed. Once a tenant signs, the landlord gets to use the signature to become eligible for conversion and the tenant can not revoke the signature under any condition.

Even if this process wasn't ripe for abuse, the concept is flawed in that it allows a minority of tenants to decide the fate of all the other tenants.

A true tenant initiated conversion process would contain elements such as some of the following (which exist in other laws):

- The conversion process can not move forward until the required percentage of tenants actually move to purchase their apartments with legally binding purchase agreements. The McGoldrick legislation regulating TIC-type condo conversions includes a provision for tenants to bypass the annual condo cap when buying their own units. However, the landlord can not convert the building unless the tenants are actually purchasing.

- Landlords must be required to provide tenants with proper disclosure prior to obtaining any signatures, including an assessment of repairs needed in the building, improvements which must be made for the conversion, how the building will be managed and what condo fees are likely, what liens or debts are outstanding on the property and any other material facts which would be required in any real estate transaction. The TORCA law in Santa Monica provided for this.

- Any non-binding signatures must be revocable by the tenant so that upon discovering relevant facts about the property, or the tenant's ability to purchase, a tenant who decides that they would not or can not purchase after all will not have their signature support a conversion the tenant does not support. The TORCA law in Santa Monica also provided for this.

- To ensure that a minority of tenants do not get to decide the fate of an entire building, in addition to the required "intent to purchase" agreements there should be an additional requirement that a majority of the tenants agree to the conversion. The Santa Monica TORCA law, for example, required 25% of the tenants wanting to purchase and 66% of the tenants agreeing to the conversion.

Converting Large Apartment Buildings To Condos A Longtime Dream For Landlords

The real estate industry has been hungry to convert large apartment buildings to condominium, but the current condo conversion law won't allow it. Now these speculators may see their dreams come true via Tony Hall's condo conversion measure which will allow buildings of any size to be converted to condominiums.

This means that Parkmerced and its thousands of apartments can be converted; it means Golden Gateway and its thousands of unit can be converted and all the other large complexes, like Stonestown or Oakwood. Not to mention the thousands of buildings with 10 units or 100 units, which have long been exempt from conversions.

Since the city's condominium conversion law was passed in the early 1980s, only apartment buildings with six or fewer units could be converted to condominiums. For the last twenty years, the speculative real estate market has focused on these smaller buildings (which actually make up almost half of the city's rental housing units).

Nearly all of the Ellis evictions have been among buildings with 2-6 units, as have nearly all "owner move in" evictions as well as virtually every other "no-fault" eviction. The bulk of these evictions were aimed at subsequently converting the apartments to condominiums.

During the housing crisis, tenants in the larger apartment buildings found themselves far more secure than their counterparts in the smaller, speculative, stock. While the tenants in the large apartment buildings were more apt to face capital improvement rent increases, their risk of eviction was considerably lower.

Nearly every other previous assault on the condo conversion law has focused on lifting the ban against the large-building exemption, with landlord groups like the

Coalition For Better Housing drooling at the prospect of converting these massive buildings to luxury condominiums.

These larger complexes may be very ripe for conversion too. Already, Parkmerced has been selling off chunks of its property to San Francisco state and other investors. Hall's condo measure will let Parkmerced chop up and sell their property even more. Golden Gateway has long rented many of its apartments to downtown corporations which use the apartments as "corporate suits." Certainly these corporations would just as soon own these apartments as condos, rather than continuing to rent them (and they certainly could afford to buy them!).

Further, these large buildings will find the rent control exemption of condominiums especially appealing, since they can sell 25% of the units to the wealthiest tenants (bringing in millions in quick cash) and still have thousands of units to rent at market rents, without rent control (bringing in millions and millions over the years).

Further, these large buildings will give themselves tremendous flexibility by converting to condos. Once the buildings are subdivided, these landlords will have the ability to sell the units at any time, as their economic needs and the market dictate. If Golden Gateway needs an infusion of cash and sale prices are high, they can choose to sell off 5% of the units. Or Parkmerced could choose to sell off its garden apartments as condos but maintain the tower apartments as rentals.

By converting these huge complexes to condos, the profit options for these landlords will be endless and the tenants living there will begin seeing the same level of Ellis and OMI evictions as the tenants in the smaller apartment buildings.

The Phony Tenant Protections

In an attempt to sell a massive condo conversion law to tenants, the landlords behind Tony Hall's HOPE measure threw in some so-called "tenant protections." These are there as pure propaganda. They sound good but are meaningless because they conflict with various state laws and California Court rulings. Further, there are holes in these protections which leave tenants vulnerable even if the protections were actually legal.

Tenants should not be fooled by these "protections": they are not worth the paper they're written on, which is why a similar law in Santa Monica saw few tenants buy and 80 percent of the tenants booted out.

The basic protection is the promise that non-purchasing tenants will get a "lifetime lease" which prohibits rent increases beyond that allowed by rent control, prohibits Ellis evictions and prohibits "owner move in" evictions. The problems with these are:

•Rent Increases Prohibition Invalidated by Costa Hawkins State Law-State law (Costa Hawkins) prohibits any form of rent limitations on most apartments converted to condominiums. This law is very broad, outlawing not just rent control for these units but any other form of rent limitations as well. In that these leases would be mandated by law, Costa Hawkins would render the rent increase limitations invalid and meaningless.

•Ellis Act Evictions Can Not Be Prohibited Locally-The Ellis Act and all court decisions interpreting it are very clear: a locality can not prohibit Ellis evictions. In fact, localities are even prohibited from setting up any "roadblocks" to an Ellis eviction (e.g., procedural steps which a landlord must take). A landlord has an absolute right to do an Ellis eviction despite what any local law may say.

•OMI Evictions Can Not Be Absolutely Prohibited-In *Cwynar v. San Francisco*, the California Court of Appeals was quite clear: any absolute prohibition against an OMI eviction is unconstitutional. e.g. a prohibition that the purchaser of a condominium could not evict the tenant living in that unit for owner move in is absolutely illegal. Whether or not San Francisco's limited OMI protections (which fall short of any absolute prohibition) may not be legal.

•Leases Do Not Take Effect Until After Conversion-Tenants do not get these phony leases until after the conversion of the building is final. This means that from the point the landlord decides to convert to when the building is finally converted-about a year-tenants are living without any of these ease "protections."

•Leases Do Not Prohibit Eviction Threats and Bluffs-Most tenants these days are evicted via landlord threats and bluffs. These most commonly take the form of threats of an Ellis or a "warning" that an owner-move-in is imminent. Or, also common, "pretext evictions" where landlords watch with baited breath for any violation of the rental agreement, no matter how small or technical (tenants with "no pets" provisions being evicted for a fish; a visit by you mother for 15 days when the agreement says no visitors longer than 14 days; rent paid on the 2nd rather than the 1st, etc. etc.) The provisions in HOPE do not contain any of the provisions in the rent control law which are aimed at preventing such threats.

**VOTE NOV 5
NO ON PROP R**

WHO SAYS NO on PROP R

- LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
- SF WOMENS POLITICAL COMMITTEE
- DEMOCRATIC WOMENS FORUM
- ASSEMBLYWOMAN CAROLE MIGDEN
- SENATE PRESIDENT JOHN BURTON
- SF LABOR COUNCIL
- SEIU LOCALS 250, 790, 535, 1877
- SF DEMOCRATIC PARTY
- SF GREEN PARTY
- SENIOR ACTION NETWORK
- SF GRAY PANTHERS
- SUP. AARON PESKIN
- SUP. TOM AMMIANO
- SUP. MATT GONZALEZ
- SUP. CHRIS DALY
- SUP. JAKE MCGOLDRICK
- FORMER SUP. SUE BIERMAN
- FORMER SUP. ANGELA ALIOTO
- FORMER SUP. HARRY BRITT
- FORMER SUP. LESLIE KATZ
- FORMER SUP. MABEL TENG
- SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER ERIC MAR
- SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER DAN KELLY
- SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER EDDIE CHIN
- COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD MEMBER LAWRENCE WONG
- ASSESSOR DORIS WARD
- PUBLIC DEFENDER-ELECT JEFF ADACHI
- REV. NORMAN FONG
- SISTER BERNIE GALVIN
- REV CECIL WILLIAMS
- CALVIN WELCH
- SF TOMORROW
- BERNAL HEIGHTS DEMOCRATIC CLUB
- LATINO DEMOCRATIC CLUB
- DISTRICT 3 DEMOCRATIC CLUB
- NOE VALLEY DEMOCRATIC CLUB
- RICHMOND DEMOCRATIC CLUB
- HARVEY MILK DEMOCRATIC CLUB
- HAIGHT ASHBURY NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
- SAN FRANCISCO TOMORROW
- MISSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION (MEDA)
- MISSION ANTI-DISPLACEMENT COALITION (MAC)
- EVICION DEFENSE COLLABORATIVE
- ST. PETER'S HOUSING COMMITTEE
- TENDERLOIN HOUSING CLINIC
- ASIAN LAW CAUCUS
- COMMUNITY TENANTS ASSOCIATION
- CHINATOWN COALITION FOR BETTER HOUSING
- HOUSING RIGHTS COMMITTEE
- AFFORDABLE HOUSING ALLIANCE
- SAN FRANCISCO TENANTS UNION

Prop R Risky and Dangerous For Tenants—A Windfall For Landlords

Continued from Page 1
change San Francisco by changing it's demographics. Never before has the Committee on Jobs spent so much money on a tenant-landlord issue and what they have in mind is a larger agenda which includes getting rid of district elections, stopping the public power movement, driving out homeless people, repealing rent control entirely, cutting health and social services to lower taxes, and privatizing the school system.. They see San Francisco's electorate as too progressive and not friendly enough to businesses and corporations. If the electorate can be changed, then the city will change. Their number one goal right now is to drive out at least half if the city's renters-which Prop R will do.

If Prop R were to pass, it's effects would be disastrous and irreversible. Evictions would soar as building after building got converted. Rents would soar as half of the apartments would disappear. And as lower

and middle class families got displaced and then replaced by wealthy condo owners, the city's demographics and politics would change by swinging sharply to the right. San Francisco would no longer be the city of diversity and character-it would become the world's largest gated community.



I WANT TO JOIN THE SFTU!

NAME: _____
 ADDRESS _____ ZIP: _____ DISTRICT: _____
 PHONE: (H) _____ (W) _____ E-MAIL: _____
 LANDLORD'S NAME: _____ DATE MOVED IN: _____
 # OF UNITS IN BLDG: _____ # OF BEDROOMS IN UNIT: _____ CURRENT RENT: _____
 1 YEAR: \$55 HOUSEHOLD \$40 REGULAR \$75 SUSTAINER \$25 LOW INCOME
 2 YEARS: \$100 HOUSEHOLD \$75 REGULAR \$140 SUSTAINER \$45 LOW INCOME

MAIL WITH YOUR CHECK TO: SFTU, 558 CAPP ST., SF, CA, 94110
 WE WILL MAIL BACK YOUR HANDBOOK AND THE MEMBER PHONE NUMBER

Tenant Times

Volume XXIII, No. 2

Newspaper of the San Francisco Tenants Union



Fall, 2002

NO on Prop R It's Rent Control Repeal

Proposition R is the most anti-tenant measure to come along on many years. If it passes, many tenants will be evicted, everyone will see higher rents, the city's character will change drastically and few-if anyone-will get to buy their apartment.

It's disguised as an "ownership" measure but it's really a radical condo conversion measure increases yearly apartment conversions to 3,900 a year (over 85,000 apartments in 25 years-nearly all rent-controlled units-into condominiums). And it allows buildings of any size-even those over 6 units-to be converted to condominiums.

As if this massive loss of rental housing units weren't bad enough, condominiums are easily removed from rent control. Proposition R means rent control repeal for 85,000 apartments-about 80% of the City's rent controlled housing!

As far as the "ownership" goes, apartment buildings will get converted to condos without a single apartment being sold to tenants.

The effect of Prop R on tenants and San Francisco will be disastrous and irreversible.

The loss of 85,000 rental units-for example-will mean higher rents for everyone. Losing half of our apartments will return the vacancy rate to near-zero. With few apartments available, rents will soar, making the dot-com boom seem like the good old days.

Or, landlords have the option of converting buildings to condominiums-to permanently get rid of the rent control-and then just continue renting the units, but without any rent control protection-meaning tenants can see their rents increased at any time and by any amount.

If you think rents are high now, just imagine what Prop R would do.

Prop R also enables a longtime landlord dream: the ability to convert large apartment buildings into condos. Current law limits condo conversions to buildings with 6 or fewer units. Prop R allows complexes as large as Parkmerced to be converted.

3,900 condo conversions a year in buildings of any size with each unit converted losing it's rent control-that's Prop R in a nutshell.

The landlords and real estate groups behind Prop R, though, are trying to hide that fact via slick marketing of the measure as being aimed at home ownership with lots of tenant protections. Sadly, few San Franciscans will ever get to buy and the tenant protections are meaningless.

In the 1980s, Santa Monica had a similar law. In converted buildings, 80% of the tenants were displaced

and just 11% were able to buy. In fact, Prop R is not even anything new in San Francisco. It's a rollback to the 1970s when condo conversions were unlimited and could be done in buildings of any size so long as some

Quick Facts About Proposition R

•Under state law, condominiums get permanently removed from rent control.

•Prop R lets landlords convert buildings to condominiums without a single unit ever being sold.

•Prop R will convert over 85,000 apartments to condominiums; that's about half of all rental units and about 80% of rent controlled units.

•Prop R lets apartment buildings of any size be converted to condos.

•Prop R will be focused on rent controlled units; most apartments exempt from rent control are those built since 1979-these buildings are already condos.

•Prop R's tenant "protections" are meaningless and clearly unenforceable under state laws.

•Prop R is exempt from the current law's requirement that at least 10% of condos be priced at affordable levels.

•Prop R is exempt from the current law's buyer disclosure requirements.

•Prop R was tried in Santa Monica: 80% of tenants were displaced while just 11% bought.

of the tenants expressed an interest in buying their units. Massive evictions led to our current condo law and a study of the effects also found that many tenants lost their homes and few were able to buy. In fact, the epidemic of condo conversion evictions in the 1970s-when out law was essentially what Prop R will again make it-led to our current condo conversion law.

Even if it were aimed at ownership, Prop R is great for sellers and a disaster for buyers. It is exempt from a whole slew of buyer protection measures in the current condo law. For example, Prop R is exempt from the requirement that buildings be inspected and potential buyers told of work needed (e.g., new foundations, roof repairs, plumbing repairs, etc). Nor do potential buyers be told how the condo will be managed or the costs of the conversion and management. Worse, if after all that, someone still wanted to buy, their offer must be "non-contingent" (e.g., can't be dependent on outcomes of a termite inspection or foundation inspection).

The proponents of Prop R-an alliance of landlords, realtors, downtown corporations and right-wing politicians like Supervisor Tony Hall-promise that tenants won't be hurt because the law contains tenant protections. In fact, these "protections" are meaningless since they are invalid and unenforceable under state laws which prohibit absolute bans on either Ellis evictions or Owner Move In evictions. Not to mention that the apartments converted to condos will be permanently removed from rent control.

What Prop R is really all about is huge profits for landlords (which is why the landlord and realtor groups are behind it) and changing the face of San Francisco by driving out renters (which is why the Committee on Jobs has given over \$100,000 to it).

Landlords stand to gain huge return on their investments by converting buildings to condos and thus increasing the worth of their asset by 50-100%-akin to having a stock portfolio double overnight (but much safer because it's San Francisco real estate, not dot-com stocks!). That equity increase will come without having to sell a single unit to a tenant. Then, once converted, the landlord has multiple options down the road: Apartments can still be rented, but without rent control. Or, the landlord can choose to sell off individual units at any time.

The Committee on Jobs and its corporate members like PG & E, the GAP, B of A, and every other big corporation, have a much more nefarious scheme in mind. One they're not shy talking about. They want to

Continued on Page 3

Tenants Union Endorsements

The November election has the latest assault on tenants rights (Prop R), more rent increases for tenants (Prop A) and another mean-spirited attack on the poor (Prop N). But on the positive side, we'll get to vote for more affordable housing (Prop B), public power (Prop D), and an anti-real estate speculation tax (Prop L). Even better, there's a real good chance that the progressive coalition on the Supervisors will jump from 7 to 8 or 9.

Proposition A-Water Bond-NO

Prop A is a huge water bond which will be passed on to tenants via automatic rent increases. Adding insult to injury, the bond will mainly increase the capacity of the Hetch Hetchy water system-and give control of it to the suburbs-so that real estate developers will have the water they need to foster more suburban sprawl. Tenants will pay for the most expensive and ecologically damaging form of housing there is. Rather than seeing more affordable housing in San Francisco, we'll see

more suburban sprawl. The measure includes a provision that landlords can automatically-without Rent Board review-pass the costs of the bonds to tenants. Systematically over the recent years, landlords have been successful in getting individual types of rent increases yanked out of rent control so that very few rent increases remain which require Rent Board approval. Currently, these automatic rent increases include PG & E increases, property tax bonds, revenue bonds, "banked" rent increases, and annual rent increases. If we continue to let rent control be chopped at piece by piece we'll look around someday and find we have no more rent control left. Vote NO on A

Proposition B-Affordable Housing-YES

What San Francisco desperately needs is more affordable housing and Proposition B will do just that. Thousands of affordable rental and ownership units will be built as a result of Prop B. The landlord groups oppose this measure because they know that creating

more affordable housing means lower rents and profits for them. Their opposition is testimony to how effective building more affordable housing is. Not only does it reduce homelessness, but over time lowers rents for all of us as the non-profit housing developers loosen the chokehold the real estate industry has on the market. Vote YES.

Proposition C-Veterans Building Bonds-NO

This is another huge bond which tenants will pay for but get no results from. It's money for more Willie Brown monuments at a time when we desperately need to spend money on housing, health care, and schools.

Proposition D-Public Power-YES

Public power means lower rates, renewable energy, and the closing of the power plant in Bayview. It also means taking electricity away from PG & E, an incompetent and bankrupt corporation which strives only for higher profits via higher electricity rates. We need public power desperately. Vote YES.

Continued on Page 4