

Tenant Times

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Ammiano or Gonzalez For Mayor Unite Behind Either In December Runoff

*Ammiano or Gonzalez For Mayor in November
Then Unite Behind The Winner
To Beat Newsom In December*

Two things are certain in this year's Mayoral race:

(1) Gavin Newsom—who has always voted for landlords and against tenants—must be defeated or our rent control is in danger.

(2) There will be a runoff election in December—the November election will determine who faces Newsom one-on-one in the real Mayoral election in December.

Realizing that the November election is just a prelude to the real contest in December, the Tenants Union has endorsed the two candidates with stellar pro-tenant voting records and urges tenants to vote for either Sup. Tom Ammiano or Supervisor President Matt Gonzalez in November and to then rally around whichever one wins the opportunity to face off against Newsom in December.

There are five major candidates in the race for Mayor—one very conservative (Newsom), one moderately conservative (Leal), one moderately progressive (Alioto) and two solid progressives (Ammiano and Gonzalez). Polling has consistently showed Newsom with about 30-35% of the vote, with the remaining candidates having between 10-25% each and dividing up the anti-Newsom votes. Thus it's pretty clear that Newsom will make the runoff and then it's a toss-up as to whether it will be Ammiano, Gonzalez or possibly Alioto (Leal lags well behind) facing off against him. Ammiano and Gonzalez are seen as having the best chance of coming in second and winning the right to take on Newsom.

Whether it's Ammiano or Gonzalez doesn't matter all that much: either a Mayor Ammiano or Mayor Gonzalez would be very good for tenants. Both have consistently and strongly supported tenants and we would expect that our rights would remain protected and even expanded with either one as Mayor. And both are a sharp contrast to Newsom, who has consistently voted against tenants and supported landlord efforts to scale back rent control.

In December the choice will be very clear: get Newsom and we'll have to fight just to save rent control. Or get Ammiano or Gonzalez and we'll be strengthening rent control and reigning in evictions and rent increases. The choice in November is not all that clear, though, since both Ammiano and Gonzalez are such good candidates for tenants and an argument can be made that either one is slightly better for tenants than the other one.

In fact, there's only one way in which tenants can lose in November and that's if we let ourselves get divided and don't rally behind either Ammiano or Gonzalez in the December runoff election. The Tenants Union—and many other progressive groups—has endorsed both candidates rather than trying to say that one is better than the other and possibly contributing to division. Vote for the one you like the best and then rally behind whoever wins in November.

Hallinan For District Attorney

There's many reasons to like DA Terence Hallinan, from his willingness to take on the Police Department to his progressive stands on issues like the death penalty and the three strikes law. He is what San Francisco should want and expect in a District Attorney.

There's particular reasons, though, why tenants should like Hallinan. When Gavin Newsom's mother got illegally evicted along with all the other tenants in a Marina apartment building, Newsom ignored the crime against his own mother—Hallinan prosecuted the landlord. And when the Tenants Union and other tenant groups identified the growing trend of tenants being forced out via eviction bluffs, Hallinan's office worked with the Tenants Union and Sup. Chris Daly to draft innovative legislation outlawing these threats. No other District Attorney has worked as closely with tenants to both prosecute landlords and write legislation protecting tenants. Hallinan clearly sees crimes by landlords as crimes worth punishing. His two main opponents, Kamala Harris and Bill Fazio, will not come close to what Hallinan has done. Harris has some progressive support but she is closely tied to the Brown machine and was the campaign manager for former Sup. Amos Brown, who was vehemently against rent control. Fazio is simply right wing. He would make a fine District Attorney in Texas. But not in San Francisco.

YES YES YES On Proposition L

In order to afford a 2 bedroom apartment in San Francisco, the household must earn at least \$34 an hour. Renting on a minimum wage of \$6.75 is near impossible—Proposition M increases the minimum wage in San Francisco to \$8.50 per hour. That's still not enough, but it's vastly better.

Proposition L is one of many local minimum wage ordinances across the country which voters are seeing on the ballot as the federal government has kept the federal minimum wage outrageously low. (The federal minimum wage used to increase annually based on inflation; in the 1980s, though, this was stopped and in the last 20 years it has hardly increased).

Proposition L exempts companies with less than 10 employees until 2005, at which point they must pay a minimum wage of at least \$7.75; then in 2006 the full \$8.50.

NO NO NO on Proposition M

Gavin Newsom has lived on handouts all his life. Unfortunately, Proposition M does not limit Newsom's ability to either beg from his rich friends or to dupe people into paying him campaign contributions. It's rather shameful that someone like Newsom would

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Ammiano Is Best Choice

Tom Ammiano has been the best friend San Francisco tenants have ever had in office. Tom and Sue Bierman were the only two politicians who joined us in the 1994 fight that brought rent control to small buildings. Tom pushed for Prop. H, to end capital improvement passthroughs; when the landlords got that struck down in court, Tom brokered a compromise (signed off on by Ted Gullicksen), so that now tenants only pay 50%—rather than 100%—of passthroughs. Tom backed Prop. N (limiting TIC Condo Conversions), and the anti-gentrification Prop L. In 1998 it was Ammiano who sponsored the moratorium on owner-move-in evictions of tenants who were seniors, disabled, or catastrophically ill (this moratorium was later made permanent by 1998's Prop G). This year Tom was one of only three Supervisors who backed the TU's ballot initiative to elect the Rent Board.

Tom's commitment to social justice extends beyond tenant issues: A former School Board President, Tom is known for his pro-student, pro-bilingual positions. He created the Domestic Partners law, championed the city's Living Wage law, spearheaded the fight for the District Elections, and opposed the INS special registration program that targets immigrants. He was a strong proponent of the Sunshine Law, and authored the amendment making large nonprofits accountable as well.

Tom has written three measures on the November ballot: the Mandatory Rainy Day Fund, to stop "binge-and-purge" spending; the Ethics Reform bill, to stop corporate lobbying by former city officials; and the strong Police Reform measure that would mean no more Fajitagate. Tom also sponsored and pushed through the ordinance that made San Francisco one of the first cities in the world to ban discrimination based on appearance (weight, height, perceived gender incongruity, etc.)

Some feel that an out gay man, one who gestures with his hands and doesn't have a "manly" baritone, cannot win, and are pushing for someone "more electable." But only Tom has the experience, the ten-year track record, the name recognition, and the endorsements to win the run-off.

Tom is endorsed by the teachers' and other unions, including Local 790; SF NOW; Public Defender Jeff Adachi; environmental groups and Green leaders including Medea Benjamin and Barry Hermanson; and activists including Dolores Huerta, Van Jones, Sue Hestor, Eric Mar, and Criss Romero. For more, go to ammianoformayor.com

Gonzalez Is Best Choice

When people ask why Matt Gonzalez jumped into the mayor's race, some of the reasons are leadership, governance and electability

The Tenants Union rates Matt's voting record at 100% over the past 3 years; Sup. Chris Daly is the only other Supervisor to have a 100% pro-tenant rating. The fact that Matt has always been a tenant and has been evicted twice in the past few years informs Matt's priorities of helping tenants keep their rental apartments and gain more rights.

Leadership

Under Matt's leadership as board president this past year, his thoughtful and well-crafted committee appointments allowed the board to run smoother and more effectively than ever. Gonzalez leads from strength instead of tilting to the center on every issue. Matt recently said, "Our ideas are better, and we don't have to water down our message for them to have appeal."

Along with Daly, Gonzalez has been the go-to person on tenant legislation. A recent Gonzalez proposal to allow tenants to add a spouse, domestic partner or family member to a household is another example of his practical leadership.

Governance

Matt offers a new level of discourse and passion for the most important issues of the city: jobs, housing, fair taxation, instant run-off voting, public power and other progressive issues. Matt has created strong alliances with both progressive and moderate board members to root out city hall cronyism and prioritize budget spending to protect our most vulnerable residents.

Matt's controversial choice of Chris Daly as chair of the Budget Committee produced the strongest city budget in years, restoring multi-million dollar cuts to healthcare and social services even though tax revenues plummeted by \$350 million. Matt's only advice to Chris when he appointed him chair was, "protect those who have the least among us".

Electability

The mayor's race is about electability. A recent public poll shows a statistical tie in a run-off between Gonzalez and Newsom. None of the other candidates except Matt come close to matching the strong support Gavin enjoys throughout the city. Since we know that Newsom wants to turn our rental apartments into condos ala last year's Prop R campaign, beating Gavin must be tenant's primary objective.

Matt is the candidate who can beat Gavin Newsom. Get involved with Matt's campaign by checking out volunteer opportunities at www.mattgonzalez.com or calling 869-1485.

Gonzalez Moves Legislation Giving Tenants Right To Move In Domestic Partners, Spouses

When Heather, a tenant for 21 years, got married she never ever thought it would result in her husband becoming homeless. But when her husband moved into her apartment with her, her landlord responded with an eviction notice: have the husband move out or get evicted. Her husband moved—into a homeless shelter.

Stories like this are increasingly common ever since California courts ruled last year in *Artel vs. Sharpe* that landlords can evict tenants when their spouses or domestic partners move in, if the rental agreement restricts the number of occupants (as most do). Since then tenants, who have naturally assumed that moving in their legal partners would be no problem are finding the reality to be "get married, get evicted."

Sup. Matt Gonzalez has introduced legislation which would once again let newly partnered couples live together. The legislation, an amendment to the rent control law, allows tenants to add an additional occupant per "sleeping room" (a Housing Code term used to define what rooms are habitable for bedrooms), even when the rental agreement limits the number of occupants in an apartment.

Thus, two tenants renting a 2 bedroom apartment would allow either one of them (or both) to get married, or become domestic partners, and then move their spouse or partner in. This would be the case even if the rental agreement limited the number of occupants to 2 people.

Besides addressing the effective ban on newly married people living together, the legislation would also benefit tenants who have lost their jobs or seen their income decrease by allowing them to bring in a new roommate to help pay the rent.

Gonzalez's amendment is not an entirely new concept: it moves current San Francisco law prohibiting discrimination against families from the Police and Housing Code to the Rent Control ordinance and thus corrects legal problems which have prevented the current law from being enforced.

Right now, the Police Code prohibits landlords from evicting tenants or giving rent increases when tenants move in "family members" ("family" is broadly defined to include traditional and non-traditional families), so long as the total number of occupants does not exceed the total number of people which would be allowed in the Housing Code. This provision is written as an anti-discrimination against families measure.

State law, though, supersedes San Francisco law on anti-discrimination measures and the state law only covers certain "protected classes" (such as children). Spouses and domestic partners are not included as "protected classes" and therefore San Francisco can not have laws protecting such people from discrimination.

The Gonzalez legislation, however, was written so that it is not an anti-discrimination measure per se. By allowing tenants an unconditional right to add one person to the household, no matter who that person is or how they might be related, it is simply a general right under rent control and therefore not pre-empted by state law.

The right to add additional occupants legislation is expected to go before the Housing and Land Use Committee in late October and will then move the full Board, probably in November.

Senior Units Included; Market rate Housing & Condos Likely

Housing Authority Selling Off 3,800 Affordable Housing Units To Developers

Over 3,800 occupied affordable housing units—about one third of them affordable housing for seniors—are on the auction block by the San Francisco Housing Authority. The massive sell off—being conducted with virtually no public notice—will mean that thousands of tenants will lose their homes and the city's scarce supply of affordable housing will most likely be reduced.

One of the SFHA's goal is to "Maximize the development potential of existing sites and provide a financial return to the Authority." The developers who purchase the sites may propose demolition of the existing buildings (all of which are occupied). While bidding requirements for potential developers calls for "one to one replacement of units demolished, the replacement units can be in the form of market rent units or home ownership opportunities." Further, commercial development will be allowed on the sites.

The sell-off goes substantially further than the previous HOPE VI demolitions of rundown housing project sites. While this proposal includes some such projects, it also includes large senior housing complexes such as Rosa Parks apartments on Turk Street (198 senior units) and Ping Yuen North in Chinatown (with 194 senior and family units).

Even in a best case scenario—where the affordable units were 100% replaced with affordable units and displaced tenants had the right to return, there appear to be no provision providing for housing for the displaced tenants during the years between eviction and reconstruction. This would be particularly problematic for displaced seniors, given San Francisco's housing costs and the extreme shortage of affordable senior housing units.

Development of the sites for commercial, market rate rental and market rate condominiums appears to be the main goal. For-profit developers are specifically allowed to bid on the 18 sites.

Unsurprisingly, the sell-off follows the selection of realtor and developer Julie Lee as the President of the Housing Authority. Lee, long active with the SF Neighbors Association, has been a vocal opponent to rent control and other measures aimed at keeping San Francisco affordable for all people.

Also, unsurprisingly, the offer to sell affordable housing to private developers includes some of the city's most valuable real estate, such as the Potrero Hill projects with expansive views of San Francisco Bay from the east side of Potrero Hill. Also for sale are all the housing projects in the Bayview/Hunters Point neighborhood, all of which also sit on valuable property, right on the bay and with expansive views.

Enabling the sale of this Housing Authority property on the southeast side of the city to private developers will expedite the steady gentrification of that side of the city, especially along the Bay. Mission Bay and Pac Bell park have already gentrified much of the eastern waterfront; the light rail extension into Bayview is expected to initiate gentrification of that neighborhood anyway, and now the SFHA selling all the affordable housing in that neighborhood to private developers spells bad news for the Bayview. Mayoral candidate Angela Alioto noted "The hill and the shipyards are going to be million dollar condos. That's why the Third Street Light Rail was built in the first place."

The Housing Authority's call for development proposals the 18 sites was quietly issued in July, with virtually no public notice and no previous public hearings on either the concept itself or the particulars of the development proposal. Continuing on in this vein, the Housing Authority is now refusing to reveal who has bid on the sites (development bids were due on September 30, 2003 and are now in hand at the Housing Authority).

Tenants Rights Handbook, 8th Edition, Scheduled For 2004 Release

A new rewrite of the comprehensive Tenants Rights Handbook (comes with membership—see form on page 4 or visit www.sftu.org) is scheduled for release in early 2004. This will be the 8th edition of this widely acclaimed book and will be bigger and better than ever. Below is an excerpt from the new book on one of the most common questions we get these days.

Breaking a Lease

What can you do if you want to get out of a lease? First, carefully re-read your contract to be certain that you even have a lease in the first place and not a month-to-month rental agreement which merely resembles a lease.

You may be lucky enough to have a landlord who will let you break the lease either because she is understanding or (more likely) because she thinks that a new tenant would be willing to pay more rent and/or sign a new lease which is more advantageous to the landlord.

If there is no provision against subletting in the lease, the tenant may sublet the apartment himself, without first getting permission from the landlord. Almost all leases (and written month-to-month rental agreements), however, forbid subletting without permission of the landlord. (See "Subletting and Assignment" in the *Roommates* chapter for more on this.)

Another alternative is for the tenant to find someone else to move in who is acceptable to the landlord. You might accomplish this by talking to friends, putting ads in the newspapers or placing notices in cafes. To ensure that the landlord will accept the new tenant, you should look for someone in the same or better economic circumstances as you, with a verifiable history as a "good tenant."

Until such a new tenant is found the old tenant is still liable for rent, even if she has moved out. However, the landlord has the legal duty to "mitigate the damages," which means that she cannot simply sit back, let the place remain vacant and make no effort to find a new tenant while still expecting to collect the rent from you. Furthermore, the old tenant is responsible **only** for the amount of rent which accrues while the place is vacant, plus certain "reasonable" costs that the landlord incurs in re-renting (e.g., newspaper ads). The landlord cannot "double dip" by collecting rent from both you and the new tenant.

Finally, if the reason you want out is that the place is in such terrible shape that you can't live there then the landlord has broken the lease, and you can move out because the landlord has effectively "evicted" you by making the place uninhabitable. Your landlord may not agree with this assessment, of course, so you should document the situation thoroughly before moving out. See "Constructive Eviction" in the *Repairs* Chapter for more information.

Tenants Union Endorsements Vote November 4, 2003!

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build a career by stomping on the down and out but Newsom actually seems to like it.

Proposition M will do NOTHING to deal with homelessness. It prohibits a wide range of solicitation of money, ranging from street vendors to people needing money for the bus. As with his so-called Care Not Cash, it's poorly written and will probably be tossed out in court. It does fit into Newsom's agenda, though. Newsom and his rich friends are made uncomfortable by seeing poverty on San Francisco's streets. Rather than trying to end the poverty, though, they simply want to make life uncomfortable for the poor and drive them out of the city. Vote No on Prop M and reject Newsom's politics of hate.

No Position on Propositions A & B

Proposition A is for school bonds; Proposition B tinkers with the city's retirement system. Neither one was seen as particularly notable tenant issue and the Tenants Union took no position on both A and B. It should be noted that 50% of all bonds are passed through to tenants and 1998's Proposition H required that any pass-through of bonds be disclosed in the Voter Information Pamphlet. Proposition A does not have that required disclosure and thus it will be argued that the school bonds can not be passed through to tenants.

No on Proposition C

Proposition C was put on the ballot by the Board of Supervisors but its roots are in San Francisco SOS, a conservative group with a pro-business and pro-landlord agenda. SF SOS would be hard core Republicans in any city but San Francisco (where admitting your a Republican means you have no credibility. They are part of the emerging right wing in San Francisco (led by Gavin Newsom). Proposition C calls for the creation of an auditor of city services-essentially evaluating the performance of various departments. The Board of Supervisors watered down the original proposal considerably. Nonetheless, it remains a dangerous measure designed to expedite "services" for businesses and landlords at the expense of services for people. (e.g., expect the Rent Board to be criticized for not approving rent increases quickly enough, rather than for its failure to protect tenants). It's pro-business, anti-government regulation: Vote No.

No Position on Proposition D

Proposition D is a charter amendment to create a Small Business Commission to advocate for the interests of "small" businesses in San Francisco. In one respect, that's good-neighborhood businesses need a voice in City Hall. On the flip side, "small" business can actually be quite large and the new Commission may be more of a voice for downtown than for neighborhood businesses.

Yes on Proposition E

Proposition E is a charter amendment which tightens up existing ethics and campaign finance laws governing conflict of interest in government and consolidates them all in a Campaign and Governmental Conduct Code. The amended ethics laws, for example, would limit lobbying by former city officials, tighten up contributions from businesses contracting with the city, and expand disclosure requirements for city officials. It is championed by Sup. Tom Ammiano, who has long made clean government part of his agenda. If Newsom were to win the Mayoral race, we would probably see even more abuses than with Brown, especially given Newsom's extensive investments which mean that many of his decisions will impact his own investments. We need Proposition E: Vote Yes.

Yes on Proposition F

Proposition F is a charter amendment which would authorize early retirement (and thus eligibility for retirement benefits) in any job classifications where layoffs are scheduled. This is a measure backed by public employee unions and city officials as a less painful way of dealing with budget shortfall created layoffs. If, for example, a department had to lay off 100 workers, it could offer employees the early retirement. If 50 people took early retirement it would mean that those laid off would be cut in half. This is a good way to minimize the pain of layoffs: Vote Yes.

Yes on Proposition G

Proposition G is an Ammiano sponsored measure to create a "Rainy Day Fund" during good economic times, with the fund to be utilized during bad times, to avoid the sort of layoffs which proposition F also

addresses). This charter amendment creates an Economic Stabilization Fund. Years in which the city brings in more money than the previous year (defined as 5+% more), half of that increase would be placed in the rainy day fund. That fund could only be expended when revenues are down from the previous year. This is basic good government which ensures that the impact on the city of economic cycles are evened out. Vote Yes.

Yes on Proposition H

The San Francisco police need to be reigned in and the existing Police Commission and Office of Citizens Complaints are not doing their job, or able to do their job. There are two basic flaws with the existing citizen oversight of the police: First, the Police Commissioners are all appointed by the Mayor (who also appoints the Police Chief) and the Supervisors have virtually no say in these appointments. Second, the Office of Citizen Complaints, generally a good office with good people, does not have the power to enforce their findings (they can only make recommendations to the Police Chief). Proposition H addresses both these problems by changing how appointments are made to the Police Commission, giving Supervisors some appointments and veto power over Mayoral appointments (as is done with the Planning Commission, for example). And it allows the Office of Citizens Complaints to file charges directly against officers (after conferring with the Police Chief, but not leaving it up to the Chief as it is now). This is a good measure: Vote Yes.

Yes on Proposition I

One thing is certain: the federal and state governments will not adequately fund services for low income people. Proposition I fills that gap by providing child care for low income families (from within the existing Children's Fund which requires that a portion of property taxes be set aside for children's services). Under Proposition I, San Francisco families with incomes of 75% or less of the California median income would be eligible to receive subsidies for child care for children between 3 and 5. This ensures child care for lower income families (who are already stressed out paying the rent) and does so out of existing revenues. Vote Yes.

No Position on Proposition J

This measure was put on the ballot by Former Sup. Angela Alioto as a measure to address homelessness. Proposition J requires that the city provide separate shelters for seniors, people who are disabled, and youth. Of that constituency, some want separate shelters (seniors) while other (people who are disabled) do not, besides being met with ambiguity by people who are homeless, the measure deals with just a tip of the problem-it doesn't create any more housing or services and won't get any more people off the streets. It's emblematic of how homelessness has become a political football. It's not a great measure but it's not a horrendous one, so the Tenants Union took no position.

No Position on Proposition K

Proposition K extends the current half-cent sales tax for transportation projects and revises the transportation plan enabling how the money can be spent. This is backed by the Bicycle Coalition and a number of environmental groups because the bulk of the money goes to transit and bicycle projects. Nonetheless, it has some problems: a good chunk of the money goes to rebuilding Doyle Drive, a highway project befitting Marin commuters. And, it's a sales tax which is regressive taxation.

No on Proposition N

Taxi drivers and companies are at the ballot more often than tenants and landlords it seems. This is another driver vs. company measure. It is cloaked as allowing disabled drivers to hold onto their taxi "medallions" even when they don't drive. Those who hold these medallions-and don't drive-rent their cabs out to the vast majority of drivers. It's akin to landlords and tenants: medallion owners reap the profits while the drivers do the work. As noted, the companies are trying to sell this as helping disabled drivers who can't drive. The problem is that there are no standards on what constitutes such a "disability" and how it will be determined. It will mean more exploitation of drivers who do the work. Vote No.

Who's Behind Gavin Newsom?

The printout of donors to Gavin Newsom runs well over 100 pages of tiny, single spaced type. It's like a who's who of landlords, realtors, developers and corporations.

Landlords

All the big ones you'd expect. For example

- Trinity Management (aka Angelo Sangiacomo, otherwise known as the "father of rent control" because he could not restrain himself from exorbitant rent increases prior to rent control.

Big apartment complexes such as

- Golden Gateway Center
- Stonestown Apartments
- Park Merced Apartments

The landlord's lobbying organization

- San Francisco Apartment Owners Association
- And other big names
- Skyline Properties
- Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA)
- Flynn Properties

And pages and pages of individual landlords, and landlord attorneys, including

- Andrew Zachs, known as the attorney who does more evictions than any other
- Numerous landlords of residential hotels in the Tenderloin; particularly notable is the All Star Hotel on 16th St., with a longtime reputation as a slum; In 1997, Newsom legislation cut in half the potential fines which could be levied on slumlords.

Realtors

The campaign filing looks like the Realtor section in the yellow pages. Nearly every realtor in San Francisco is listed, including

- SF Association of Realtors
- Zephyr Realty
- Herth Realty
- McGuire Realty
- Hill & Company
- Coldwell Banker

Corporations

All the big ones you'd expect, like

- SF Chamber of Commerce
- Bank of America
- PG & E
- Chevron Texaco
- The Gap

Help Us Out!

The San Francisco Tenants Union needs your assistance to continue its mission of furthering tenant's rights and securing affordable housing for San Francisco renters.

Donate

The Tenants Union is no different from many other non-profit organizations that have seen their budgets suffer over the past year. This would be a great time to make a donation to the SFTU so we can pursue state-wide and local changes to strengthen rent laws and protect tenants. Even if your current landlord relationship is peachy-keen, this would be a great time to consider a gift to the SFTU so that your rights are as strong as ever when your landlord begins to flex his or her muscles to control your home. Please consider digging in to help the SFTU meet its needs and goals.

Tenants Union Endorsements

MAYOR
Tom Ammiano
OR
Matt Gonzalez

DISTRICT ATTORNEY
Terence Hallinan

- Prop A-School Bonds**
No Position
- Prop B-Retirement Benefits**
No Position
- Prop C-City Services Auditor**
NO
- Prop D-Small Business Commission**
NO
- Prop E-Stronger Ethics Laws**
YES
- Prop F-Early Retirement Option**
YES
- Prop G-Rainy Day Fund**
YES
- Prop H-Police Oversight**
YES
- Prop I-Child Care**
YES
- Prop J-Separate Shelters**
No Position
- Prop K-Transportation Sales Tax**
No Position
- Prop L-Minimum Wage**
YES YES YES
- Prop M-Bash Poor People**
NO NO NO
- Prop N-Hurts Cab Drivers**
NO

Help Us Help You! Fill Out The Enclosed Questionnaire

As counselors at the San Francisco Tenants Union we try to explain your rights under the law and how to access those rights, such as filing a petition at the Rent Board. However, we need your real-life experiences in order to better counsel others. For this reason, we beg you to fill out the enclosed questionnaire (inserted in the paper) if you have had any experiences regarding the part of the Rent Ordinance known as 6.14.

This may mean, for example, that you joined an ongoing tenancy as a roommate and needed to know if the landlord could raise your rent after the original tenants moved out.

Please fill out the questionnaire, fold it, seal it and send it to us even if you never filed a petition at the Rent Board but resolved the matter on your own. We need your help in order to provide the best possible service!

Gavin Newsom: BAD News For Tenants

Gavin Newsom is a dangerous and ambitious man who is trying to fool San Franciscans into thinking he is just one of us. Make no doubt about it, if he becomes Mayor eliminating (or at least scaling back) rent control will be top on his agenda. Newsom has consistently voted against pro-tenant measures at the Board of Supervisors and has strongly supported landlord efforts to roll back rent control and other tenant rights. Newsom is so anti-tenant that he even voted against a measure to limit Ellis evictions of seniors.

Newsom is a landlord and a developer (of live/work units) with close ties to the city's real estate industry and downtown businesses. He has been endorsed by the SF Apartment owners Association, the SF Board of Realtors, the SF Small Property Owners Association, the Building Owners and Managers Association, and the Coalition For Better Housing (the organization representing the city's biggest landlords). His campaign donors include all of these landlord groups plus notable landlords and realtors like Angelo Sangiacomo (Trinity Properties) and Zephyr Realty.

Newsom is particularly dangerous because he has adopted a George Bush Orwellian speak and the media-infatuated with him have let him get away with it. For instance, in a recent interview, the media left unchallenged his assertion that he was "somewhat to the left of anti-war Presidential candidate Howard Dean," even though Newsom voted at the Board of Supervisors to support the invasion of Iraq. More diabolical, especially for tenants, was a 1997 amendment to the city's Housing Code which Newsom sponsored. Newsom's measure cut in half the fines which can be levied on slumlords who violate basic habitability laws (e.g., not providing heat). Newsom tucked into that measure a meaningless provision "giving" judges the option of sentencing slumlords to live in their own properties (a power the judges already had). The media then trumpeted his measure as forcing slumlords to live in their own slums, never once noting that what the measure really did was to benefit slumlords by reducing their fines.

Gavin Newsom, a landlord and developer, also says he supports rent control but has supported over the years a variety of landlord proposals to scale back rent control, including:

- Prop R in 2002 which would have removed rent control from 80,000 apartments

- So called "means testing" for rent control which would force tenants to reveal their personal finances to landlords or lose their rent control.

- Prop E in 1998 which would have removed rent control from 30,000 apartments in 2-4 unit buildings.

- So called "principal place of residency" requirement for rent control, which would let landlords remove rent control from tenants who did not spend 365 days a year at their apartment.

On every other tenant-landlord measure at the Board of Supervisors, Newsom has consistently sided with landlords, including:

- In 2000 he opposed Proposition N which would have limited condo conversions.

- In 2000 he opposed proposition H, which limited capital improvement rent increases.

- In 2000 he voted against providing low income tenants with eviction defense assistance.

- In 2001, he voted against a measure to exempt seniors from Ellis Act evictions

- In 2001 and 2002 he voted against requiring developers to include affordable housing in their developments.

- Throughout the dot-com boom, he could not vote on legislation limiting live/work units because he himself is a developer of live/work units.

- In 2003 he voted against a measure to give tenants more seats on the San Francisco Rent Board.

His votes on other measures of interest to progressives have also been pretty bad:

- In 1999, he voted against requiring city contractors to pay a "Living Wage."

- In 2000 he voted against limiting ATM fees and the banks "double dipping."

- In 2000, he voted against strengthening campaign finance laws.

- In 2001 he voted against public power.

- In 2002, he voted against restricting "big box" developments, like Home Depot, from coming into our neighborhoods.

- In 2002, he voted against giving neighborhoods advance notice of big developments in their neighborhoods.

- In 2002, he voted to rubber stamp all of Willie Brown's pro-development appointments to the Planning Commission,

www.sftu.org

ALL THE LATEST TENANT NEWS

RENTERS' RADIO

Presented by San Francisco Liberation Radio and the San Francisco Tenants Union

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9:00 AM-11:00 AM
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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