

# CITY OF SAN DIEGO

(This Measure will appear on the ballot in the following form.)

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## MEASURE B.

**CHARTER AMENDMENTS ESTABLISHING COMMISSION ON POLICE PRACTICES.** Shall the City Charter be amended to dissolve the Community Review Board on Police Practices and replace it with a Commission on Police Practices, with members appointed by the City Council, its own staff, subpoena power, independent legal counsel, and authority to investigate police officer misconduct, review complaints against officers, and make recommendations on police officer discipline, police policies, and Police Department legal compliance?

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This measure requires approval of a simple majority (50% plus 1) of those voting on the measure.  
Full text of this measure follows the argument.

## OFFICIAL TITLE AND SUMMARY

### BALLOT TITLE

Amendments to the San Diego City Charter Relating to Dissolving the Community Review Board on Police Practices and Establishing a Commission on Police Practices.

### BALLOT SUMMARY

This measure would amend the San Diego City Charter (Charter) to dissolve the Community Review Board on Police Practices and establish a Commission on Police Practices (Commission), including key elements of the Commission's structure and responsibilities.

The Charter presently authorizes the Mayor and the City Council (Council) to establish a Community Review Board on Police Practices (CRB) to review and evaluate citizens' complaints against members of the City's Police Department and the Police Department's administration of discipline arising from complaints. The CRB presently must review all deaths occurring while a person is in the Police Department's custody and all police officer-related shootings. CRB members are appointed by the Mayor with Council confirmation.

This measure would amend the Charter to dissolve the CRB and replace it with a Commission, established as an investigatory body of the City, with members appointed by the Council. The Commission would be staffed by an executive director, who is appointed by the Council; investigators and other City employees or contractors, who are independent of the Police Department and the Mayor; and legal counsel, independent of the City Attorney.

If approved by the voters, the new Commission would be required to independently investigate all deaths occurring while a person is in the Police Department's custody, all deaths resulting from interaction with a City police officer, and all City police officer-related shootings. The Commission may also investigate allegations against officers of inappropriate sexual conduct, physical assault, and domestic violence. The Charter amendments grant the Commission subpoena power to obtain witness testimony and documents, enforceable through contempt proceedings under state law.

The Commission would also be required to receive, register, review, and evaluate all complaints against City police officers. The Commission may investigate complaints, unless the complainant has requested that a complaint be handled without investigation or where no specific allegation or police officer can be identified. The Commission would be required to review the Police Department's compliance with reporting laws.

## **BALLOT SUMMARY (CONTINUED)**

The Commission would have authority to review and advise on Police Department investigations, policies, and imposition of discipline, but the City's Police Chief retains authority to impose discipline of subordinate officers, as the Charter presently provides.

The Commission would be required to make public reports of its activities.

The Commission must act in accordance with applicable federal and state laws. Police officers may appeal a sustained finding of police misconduct by the Commission to the City's Civil Service Commission.

The Council authorized placement of this measure on the ballot after receiving the proposal from a community-based organization called "Women Occupy San Diego" and holding multiple public hearings.

This measure requires approval by a majority of the qualified voters of the City of San Diego voting on the measure. If approved, the Charter amendments would become effective after they are chaptered by the California Secretary of State.

## **CITY ATTORNEY IMPARTIAL ANALYSIS**

This measure amends the San Diego City Charter (Charter) to change civilian oversight of the City Police Department (Department) and its officers.

Under existing law, the Mayor and City Council (Council) have established the Community Review Board on Police Practices (CRB), which reviews and evaluates citizens' complaints against City police officers and the Department's administration of discipline arising from complaints. The CRB may independently refer an investigation to the grand jury, district attorney, or any other governmental agency authorized by law to investigate the activities of a law enforcement agency. The CRB is also required to review all deaths occurring while a person is in City police custody and all police officer-related shootings, but the CRB does not independently investigate these incidents.

If approved by voters, this measure would dissolve the CRB and replace it with a Commission on Police Practices (Commission). The Commission would serve as an investigatory body of the City, operating independent of the Police Department and Mayor. Commission staff would include an executive director, appointed by the Council, to serve at the direction and will of the Commission. The Commission must retain its own legal counsel, independent of the City Attorney. Commission staff must be employed in accordance with the City's civil service rules and annual salary ordinance, and must follow City rules related to contracts and records retention, confidentiality, and disclosure.

The Commission would have the power to subpoena witnesses and documents, enforceable through contempt proceedings under state law, and would retain the authority to refer cases to outside law enforcement agencies.

The Commission would initially be composed of members of the CRB. The Council would formally appoint Commission members after establishing, by ordinance, the number, term length, qualifications, and method for appointments, and defining the circumstances and process under which Commission members may be removed for cause.

The Commission would be required to investigate all deaths occurring while a person is in Department custody, all deaths resulting from interaction with a City police officer, and all City officer-related shootings. Investigations must be conducted in accordance with rights afforded to police officers under federal and state law.

The Commission must also receive and review all complaints against City police officers except in specified circumstances.

## CITY ATTORNEY IMPARTIAL ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)

The Commission would have authority to investigate complaints against officers but must first consider specified factors. Also, the Commission may, but would not be required to, review, evaluate, and investigate allegations of inappropriate sexual conduct, physical assault, or domestic violence by officers.

The Commission may make recommendations to the Police Chief on policies and discipline, but the Police Chief would retain existing authority under the Charter, including the authority to determine discipline of subordinate officers.

The Commission also must review and evaluate the Police Department's compliance with reporting laws and make public semi-annual reports regarding the Commission's exercise of its duties and powers.

The measure also authorizes the City's Civil Service Commission to determine appeals by City police officers, following any sustained findings of police officer misconduct by the Commission.

### FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

This measure would dissolve the Community Review Board on Police Practices (CRB) and, in its place, would establish an independent Commission on Police Practices (Commission). The Commission, constituting an investigatory body of the City, would be comprised of community members appointed by the City Council, with subpoena powers, independent legal counsel, and City staff outside of San Diego Police Department (SDPD) and Mayoral supervision.

If approved, the Commission will have certain duties that are required and others that are discretionary. The Commission will be required to independently investigate: (1) all deaths occurring while a person is in the custody of SDPD; (2) all deaths resulting from interaction with an SDPD officer; and (3) all police officer-involved shootings. Based on data provided by SDPD for the historical number of SDPD officer-related deaths and shooting events over the last ten years, this requirement could comprise of up to fifteen investigations per year.

Additionally, the Commission must receive, register, review and evaluate all citizen complaints, except those where the complainant does not request an investigation or where no specific allegation or SDPD officer is identified. At the Commission's discretion, it will have the authority to independently investigate any or all of the complaints that it is required to receive, register, review, and evaluate. According to data provided by SDPD, over the last ten years, on average 126 complaints have been received per year that would have been eligible for the Commission to investigate; it is unknown how many complaints the Commission may choose to investigate.

Other duties include the requirement to evaluate of SDPD compliance with federal, state, and local reporting laws and requirements and the submission of semi-annual reports to the Mayor and City Council regarding the exercise of the Commission's duties and powers. The Commission may also review, evaluate and make recommendations on any policies, procedures, practices, and actions of SDPD.

In addition to what is described above, the Commission has other duties and powers included in the ballot proposal, which may be further specified by City Council Ordinance, should this measure be approved by voters.

If approved, a sufficient and appropriate budget for the Commission is expected to be funded from the City's General Fund in an amount to be approved annually by the City Council. **It is estimated that the necessary staffing and budget for the Commission could reasonably range between at least seven (7) Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions and \$1.2 million annually and up to sixteen (16) FTEs and \$2.6 million annually in order to allow it to effectively carry out its duties and powers proposed under the ballot measure.** The range is primarily due to the Commission's discretionary authority to

## FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)

determine the level of citizen complaints it chooses to investigate. **Current annual funding from the General Fund for the CRB, budgeted at approximately \$247,000 for Fiscal Year 2021, would no longer be required. Potential fiscal impacts to the SDPD budget, if any, are unknown.**

### ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF MEASURE B

**The City of San Diego does not have an independent process for investigating complaints regarding police misconduct** (such as in-custody deaths, shootings, excessive force, and perjury). This has contributed to trust in local policing reaching an all-time low. Measure B will fix this issue by creating an independent, community-led **Commission on Police Practices**.

The Commission on Police Practices will create a **trustworthy process for holding officers accountable** that is **fair and balanced**. This Commission will:

- Be **independent from City politics**;
- Have an **independent attorney** who doesn't also represent the Mayor and the San Diego Police Department;
- Be run by **community members**, and;
- Have **independent professionals** who will **investigate** claims of **police misconduct**, including complaints of **domestic violence and sexual assault** by law enforcement.

As professionals, police officers should be subject to independent oversight and accountability, as doctors, lawyers, dentists, and other professionals are held to this standard. The independent oversight brought by the new Commission will strengthen community trust and has the potential to **reduce** the millions of dollars each year that The City of San Diego pays for **lawsuits from police misconduct**.

[www.sandiegansforjustice.com](http://www.sandiegansforjustice.com)

### VOTE YES ON MEASURE B

MONICA MONTGOMERY  
Councilmember  
San Diego City Council, District 4

ANDREA ST. JULIAN  
Board President  
Earl B. Gilliam Bar Association

MARESA TALBERT  
Co-Chair  
San Diegans for Justice

KATE YAVENDITTI  
Women Occupy San Diego

**NO ARGUMENT AGAINST MEASURE B WAS FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK.**

**FULL TEXT OF MEASURE B**  
**ARTICLE V**  
**EXECUTIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE**

**Section 40: City Attorney**

A City Attorney shall be elected for a term of four years in the manner prescribed by Section 10 of this Charter. The City Attorney shall hold office for the term prescribed from and after 10 a.m. on the tenth day of December next succeeding the election and until a successor is elected and qualified. If the tenth day of December falls on a weekend or holiday, the term shall begin at 10 a.m. on the next calendar day that is not a weekend or a holiday.

No person shall serve more than two consecutive four-year terms as City Attorney. If for any reason a person serves a partial term as City Attorney in excess of two years, that partial term shall be considered a full term for purposes of this term limit provision.

The City Attorney shall be the chief legal adviser of, and attorney for the City and all Departments and offices thereof in matters relating to their official powers and duties, except in the case of the Ethics Commission and the Commission on Police Practices, which each shall have its own legal counsel independent of the City Attorney. The attorney and his or her deputies shall devote their full time to the duties of the office and shall not engage in private legal practice during the term for which they are employed by the City, except to carry to a conclusion any matters for which they have been retained prior to taking office. The City Attorney must be licensed to practice law in the State of California and must have been so licensed for at least ten years at the time he or she submits nominating petitions.

The City Attorney shall appoint such deputies, assistants, and employees to serve him or her, as may be provided by ordinance of the Council, but all appointments of subordinates other than deputies and assistants shall be subject to the Civil Service provisions of this Charter. The City Attorney may appoint no more than six Assistant City Attorneys and four other assistants, who shall serve at the pleasure of the City Attorney and may be removed by the City Attorney at any time.

No Deputy City Attorney, who has served continuously as a Deputy City Attorney in the Office of the City Attorney for one year or more shall be terminated or suspended without good cause, except that any Deputy City Attorney may be subject to layoff due to lack of work or insufficient appropriation to meet the salary requirements necessary to maintain existing personnel in the Office of the City Attorney.

To ensure that Deputy City Attorneys conduct their legal work with the highest level of integrity, honesty, and professionalism, good cause for purposes of termination or suspension includes, but is not limited to, failure to comply with the California Rules of Professional Conduct.

It shall be the City Attorney's duty, either personally or by such assistants as he or she may designate, to perform all services incident to the legal department; to give advice in writing when so requested, to the Council, its Committees, the Manager, the Commissions, or Directors of any department, but all such advice shall be in writing with the citation of authorities in support of the conclusions expressed in said written opinions; to prosecute or defend, as the case may be, all suits or cases to which the City may be a party; to prosecute for all offenses against the ordinances of the City and for such offenses against the laws of the State as may be required of the City Attorney by law; to prepare in writing all ordinances, resolutions, contracts, bonds, or other instruments in which the City is concerned, and to endorse on each approval of the form or correctness thereof; to preserve in the City Attorney's office a docket of all cases in which the City is interested in any of the courts and keep a record of all proceedings of said cases; to

## FULL TEXT OF MEASURE B (CONTINUED)

preserve in the City Attorney's office copies of all written opinions he or she has furnished to the Council, Manager, Commission, or any officer. Such docket, copies and papers shall be the property of the City, and the City Attorney shall, on retiring from office, deliver the same, together with all books, accounts, vouchers, and necessary information, to his or her successor in office.

The City Attorney shall have charge and custody of all legal papers, books, and dockets belonging to the City pertaining to his office, and, upon a receipt therefor, may demand and receive from any officer of the City any book, paper, documents, or evidence necessary to be used in any suit, or required for the purpose of the office.

The City Attorney shall apply, upon order of the Council, in the name of the City, to a court of competent jurisdiction for an order or injunction to restrain the misapplication of funds of the City or the abuse of corporate powers, or the execution or performance of any contract made in behalf of the City which may be in contravention of the law or ordinances governing it, or which was procured by fraud or corruption.

The City Attorney shall apply, upon order of the Council, to a court of competent jurisdiction for a writ of mandamus to compel the performance of duties of any officer or commission which fails to perform any duty expressly enjoined by law or ordinance.

The City Attorney shall perform such other duties of a legal nature as the Council may by ordinance require or as are provided by the Constitution and general laws of the State.

The Council shall have authority to employ additional competent technical legal attorneys to investigate or prosecute matters connected with the departments of the City when such assistance or advice is necessary in connection therewith. The Council shall provide sufficient funds in the annual appropriation ordinance for such purposes and shall charge such additional legal service against the appropriation of the respective Departments.

Effective December 10, 2020, the salary paid to the City Attorney will be equal to the salary prescribed by law and as adjusted by law for judges of the Superior Court for the State of California, provided that the salary of the City Attorney may not be decreased during a term of office.

Whenever a vacancy exists in the office of the City Attorney, an Assistant City Attorney, previously designated by the City Attorney to fulfill duties in the event of a vacancy and whose name has been recorded with the City Clerk as the Interim City Attorney in the event of a vacancy, shall fulfill the duties of the City Attorney as the Interim City Attorney until a replacement can be appointed or elected as provided by this Charter. The Interim City Attorney shall have the full authority of the Office.

### Section 41: Commissions

The Mayor shall appoint, subject to the confirmation of the Council, members of all commissions, established pursuant to this section-, except the members of the Commission on Police Practices, whose appointment and service are governed by Section 41.2 of this Charter. Whenever the Mayor does not appoint a member within forty-five (45) days after a vacancy occurs, the Council shall make such appointment. The commissioners shall be limited to two (2) full consecutive terms, with one (1) term intervening before they become eligible for reappointment; and this provision shall apply to anyone who has served two (2) full consecutive terms by January 1972. The terms of commissioners may extend beyond the elective term of the appointing Mayor. The Mayor shall fill, subject to the confirmation of the Council, any vacancy and such appointment shall be for the unexpired term of the office being filled. The City Council may remove a member of the Civil Service Commission for cause by vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Council. However, before the Council may remove a member of the Civil

## FULL TEXT OF MEASURE B (CONTINUED)

Service Commission, written charges shall be made against the commission member and an opportunity afforded for public hearing before the Council upon such charges. The City Council may remove members of all other commissions established pursuant to this section for cause by vote of a majority of the members of the Council.

- (a) Funds Commission. [No change in text.]
- (b) Civil Service Commission. [No change in text.]
- (c) City Planning Commission. [No change in text.]
- (d) Ethics Commission. [No change in text.]

### **Section 41.2: Commission on Police Practices**

A Commission on Police Practices is established, which supersedes the Community Review Board on Police Practices. The Commission on Police Practices is referred to in this section as the "Commission," the Police Department of the City of San Diego is referred to as the "Police Department," and an officer of the Police Department is referred to as an "officer" or "police officer."

The Commission is an investigatory body of the City of San Diego, independent of the Mayor and the Police Department.

The Commission has certain mandatory duties and discretionary powers, as described in this section. The City Council may, by ordinance, mandate additional duties and authorize additional powers for the Commission, consistent with this section and applicable federal and state law. The City Council may also establish rules and procedures to implement this section. Subject to any limitations set forth in governing federal or state law, the Commission is authorized to refer any matter before the Commission to the grand jury, district attorney, or other governmental agency that is authorized by law to investigate the activities of a law enforcement agency.

The City Council must appoint the members of the Commission. The City Council may remove members of the Commission for cause by a vote of a majority of the members of the City Council. The City Council must, by ordinance, establish the number, term length, qualifications, and method for appointing members of the Commission, and define the circumstances and process under which the City Council determines there is cause for removal of a member of the Commission.

The Commission will be composed of members of the Community Review Board on Police Practices serving at the time this section takes effect, until the City Council has formally appointed members to the Commission, in accordance with the ordinance described in this section.

The City Council must appoint and establish the initial annual compensation for the Commission's Executive Director, who serves at the direction and will of the Commission. The Commission must conduct the annual performance review of the Executive Director, and may modify the Executive Director's annual compensation, consistent with the compensation schedules established by the City Council in adopting the annual salary ordinance. The Executive Director serves as the appointing authority for additional employees assisting the Commission, who must be appointed and serve in accordance with this Charter. The Executive Director is authorized to employ outside experts or consultants to assist with the Commission's work on a contractual basis, consistent with the City's contracting rules. The Commission must retain its own legal counsel, who is independent of the City Attorney, for legal support and advice in carrying out the Commission's duties and actions.

## FULL TEXT OF MEASURE B (CONTINUED)

The Executive Director serves as custodian of the Commission's records and must comply with all applicable laws related to records retention, protection, confidentiality, and disclosure. The Police Department must make available its records, relating to any matter under investigation, review, or evaluation by the Commission, subject to the restrictions of applicable federal and state law.

The Commission has the power to conduct investigatory proceedings, subpoena witnesses and compel their attendance and testimony, administer oaths and affirmations, and require by subpoena the production of any books, papers, records, or other items material to the performance of the Commission's duties or exercise of its powers, subject to the restrictions of and in accordance with this section and applicable federal and state law. The Commission may enforce its administrative subpoenas by initiating contempt procedures, upon a majority vote of the Commission and in the manner provided by applicable state law.

The Commission must independently investigate all deaths occurring while a person is in the custody of the Police Department; all deaths resulting from interaction with an officer of the Police Department; and all City police officer-related shootings. The Commission has this duty whether or not a complaint has been made against a police officer or the Police Department. These investigations must be conducted by Commission staff or contractors who are independent of the Police Department, and in accordance with the officer's federal and state law rights.

The Commission may, but is not required to, investigate complaints against officers of the Police Department, which do not involve in-custody deaths, deaths resulting from an interaction with a police officer, or police officer-related shootings. However, the Commission must not investigate a complaint where the complainant has requested that the complaint be handled without investigation or where no specific allegation or police officer can be identified.

In determining whether to investigate a complaint that the Commission has the discretionary power, but not the mandatory duty, to investigate, the Commission must consider whether the complaint arises from any of the following: (1) an incident in which the use of force by a City police officer against a person resulted in great bodily injury; (2) dishonesty by a City police officer directly relating to the reporting, investigation, or prosecution of a crime, or directly relating to the reporting of, or investigation of misconduct by another peace officer or custodial officer, including an allegation of perjury, false statements, filing false reports, destruction, falsifying, or concealing of evidence; (3) an incident that has generated substantial public interest or concern; (4) an incident in which data shows a pattern of misconduct by any Police Department officer; or (5) an incident in which data shows a pattern of inappropriate policies, procedures, or practices of the Police Department or its members.

The Commission must receive, register, review, and evaluate all complaints against officers of the Police Department, except the Commission must not review or evaluate a complaint where the complainant has requested that the complaint be handled without investigation or where no specific allegation or police officer can be identified.

The Commission may, but is not required to, review, evaluate, and investigate allegations of inappropriate sexual conduct, physical assault, or domestic violence by officers of the Police Department, whether or not a written complaint has been submitted to the Commission or the Police Department.

The Commission must review and evaluate all factual findings and evidentiary conclusions of the Police Department arising from investigations of police misconduct and all disciplinary decisions proposed by the Chief of Police or designee following



## FULL TEXT OF MEASURE B (CONTINUED)

sustained findings of police misconduct, with the terms “police misconduct” and “police officer misconduct,” to be defined by the City Council by ordinance. The Commission may, but is not required to, review and evaluate the Police Department’s administration of discipline arising from sustained complaints, which do not involve allegations of police misconduct, and from matters investigated by the Commission. The Commission may, but is not required to, make recommendations to the Police Department on the discipline of individual officers against whom complaints have been made or about whom the Commission has conducted an investigation.

The Commission must review and evaluate the Police Department’s compliance with federal, state, and local reporting laws and requirements. The Commission must also prepare and submit semi-annual reports to the Mayor and City Council regarding the exercise of the Commission’s duties and powers. These reports must be public, but must not disclose any information required to be kept confidential by controlling federal or state law.

The Commission may, but is not required to, review and evaluate the policies, procedures, practices, and actions of the Police Department. The Commission may make specific recommendations to the Police Department, the Mayor, and the City Council on any policies, procedures, practices, and actions of the Police Department.

The Chief of Police must consider the Commission’s evaluation of proposed police officer discipline, prior to imposition of the discipline, to the extent permitted within applicable federal and state law, and only if the evaluation is completed before the statutory timelines, set forth in the California Public Safety Officers Procedural Bill of Rights or subsequent, applicable state laws, for the Police Department to act on the evaluation. The Chief of Police retains authority and discretion to discipline subordinate employees in the Police Department, in accordance with Section 57 of this Charter.

Any sustained findings of police officer misconduct by the Commission are subject to appeal, as required by California law. These sustained findings may be appealed to the City’s Civil Service Commission.

### **Section 43: Advisory Boards and Committees**

(a) through (c) [No change in text.]

~~(d) Community Review Board on Police Practices. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Charter, the Mayor and City Council shall have the exclusive authority to create and establish a community review board on police practices to review and evaluate citizens’ complaints against members of the San Diego Police Department and the San Diego Police Department’s administration of discipline arising from such complaints. The Mayor and City Council shall establish such rules and regulations as may be necessary for this board to carry out its functions; provided, however, that such rules and regulations shall be consistent with the laws of the State of California concerning citizens’ complaints against peace officers. Nothing in such rules and regulations shall interfere with the board’s authority to independently refer a completed citizen complaint investigation to the grand jury, district attorney, or any other governmental agency authorized by law to investigate the activities of a law enforcement agency. The board shall review all deaths occurring while a person is in the custody of the San Diego Police Department and all police officer-related shootings. The board shall submit semiannual reports to the Mayor and City Council concerning its evaluation of the San Diego Police Department’s investigation of citizens’ complaints; provided, however, that such reports shall not disclose any information required to be kept confidential by law.~~

# FULL TEXT OF MEASURE B (CONTINUED)

## ARTICLE VIII CIVIL SERVICE

### Section 115: Civil Service Commission

This Commission shall have supervision over the selection, promotion, and removal of all employees of the City, subject to the Civil Service provisions of this Charter. This Commission shall also conduct and determine appeals of sustained findings of police officer misconduct by the Commission on Police Practices, established by this Charter, as required by California law.

**END OF MEASURE**