

President Shamann Walton's Comments at November 16, 2021 Board of Supervisors Meeting

Request for Legislation: Open Source Voting

Agenda Item #20. Roll Call for Introductions

Walton: [1:40:18] Thank you so much, Madame Clerk. Today, colleagues, I am requesting legislation from the City Attorney to authorize an open source voting pilot in San Francisco for the November 2022 election, which would require the San Francisco Department of Elections to submit a plan to the Secretary of State no later than February 8, 2022.

In the United States and California, we rely on a for-profit model from election equipment security and one that is costly and lacks transparency. Open source voting will allow the City's IT teams to work with vendors on voting equipment software because it uses publicly available computer code.

The proposed pilot will give voters in the City Hall Voting Center the option of using VotingWorks' accessible ballot marking device. I also understand that Director Arntz is already working with VotingWorks on details and a contract for the pilot. This legislation will codify that process.

Earlier in August, I sent a letter along with President David Canepa of the San Mateo Board of Supervisors to the California Secretary of State requesting her office adopt regulations governing voting system pilot programs as required under Senate Bill 360, which was passed in 2013. Open source voting was also supported by former Secretary of State, Alex Padilla.

San Francisco has a long history of advocating for an open source voting system starting with former Supervisor Tom Ammiano with a resolution looking into the feasibility of an open source voting system in 2007 and a resolution from former Supervisor Scott Wiener supporting the creation of an open source voting system in 2014.

Open source voting will allow the public to own these voting systems and ensure that our elections are fair, honest, and secure.

The rest I submit.