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30 Years of Feminism
From Marching in the Streets to a Seat at the Table

May 13, 2018

Cathy Murillo, Mayor
 Jason Dominguez, Councilmember, District 1
 Randy Rowse, Councilmember, District 2
 Kirsten Sneddon, Councilmember, District 4
 Eric Friedman, Councilmember, District 5
 Gregg Hart, Councilmember, District 6
 City Hall
 P.O. Box 1990
 Santa Barbara, CA 93102-1990

By Email and U.S. Mail

Re: Filling Vacancies on City Council

Dear Mayor and City Council Members:

The Santa Barbara Women’s Political Committee (SBWPC) opposes any ballot measure providing for the appointment of a council member until the next general election instead of calling a special election in case of a vacancy on the Council.

SBWPC is one of the largest women’s political committees in Santa Barbara County representing over 400 members. We are dedicated to achieving our vision of a society based upon the feminist values of social, political, racial and economic gender equality.

Voting is fundamental to our democratic process. Equal access to the political process and an opportunity for everyone’s voice to be heard are central to our vision. We believe strongly that the residents of a district in which a vacancy occurs should not be deprived of their right to select their representative on the City Council. This would be contrary to our fundamental values. It would also be contrary to the letter and spirit of the settlement agreement reached after a Voting Rights Act lawsuit which states that “City Council members are required to be residents of their respective districts and to be nominated and elected by the residents of their respective electoral districts.”

Thank you for reviewing SBWPC’s position on this issue. Should you wish to communicate further with us, please email us at info@sbwpc.org or visit our website: www.sbwpc.org.

Sincerely,
Catherine J. Swysen
 Catherine J. Swysen, President