

MEASURE B
County of Marin Fiscal Management Consolidation Act

Concern: Loss of independence and accountability of positions.

Response: Ensuring independent financial oversight with an appointed Director of Finance is important. Measure B provides for the following:

- Creation of an appointed position allows the County to set high standards for professionalism and accountability to recruit the highest quality candidates.
- Ensures high ethical standards in appointing a Director of Finance, similar to recruitment of other appointed department heads and the County Administrator.
- An appointed department head would also be held accountable on a daily basis, not just every four years in an election.
- The Finance Director could only be removed by a public hearing and a 4/5 vote of the Board of Supervisors rather than a simple majority vote.
- An outside independent audit would be conducted annually to verify proper financial management of the new office.
- Appointment of the Director of Finance by the Board of Supervisors would increase oversight and accountability of financial practices by the County's governing board.

Concern: Appointed and elected officials can both be pressured /influenced by politics and to whom they report.

Response:

- Political influence/pressure can be an issue regardless of whether a position is appointed or elected.
- Creation of an appointed position allows the County to set high standards of professionalism to recruit the highest quality candidates.
- County would also ensure high ethical standards in appointing the Director of Finance, similar to the appointment of other appointed department officials.

Concern: Timing is being forced by early retirement of current Auditor- Controller without a full review of the issues.

Response:

- Issue of integrating financial management structure under an appointed Finance Director has been reviewed in detail and closely aligns the position with the County's 2001 Strategic Plan, its 2004 Managing for Results objectives, and reflects recommendations of an outside management consultant (Management

Partners) that is currently reviewing the County's financial management structure.

- A number of issues have driven the proposal including the need for modernizing the financial management structure to reflect the integration of financial structures, and the creation of a Director of Finance position is a trend among counties given the increased complexity of financial management (and similar to nearly all city governments).

Concern: Cost savings or increases are unsubstantiated.

Response:

- Based on other counties experience, initial cost saving from this consolidation is estimated to be at least \$100,000 annually through combining similar functions and other related organizational charges.
- In the long term, counties that have combined the functions report improved efficiencies, better service, and increased opportunities for cross-training and promotional opportunities for staff.

Concern: The small hiring pool of qualified applicants raises issues of recruiting and county requirements of living in Marin.

Response:

- The small pool of qualified applicants is one of the main reasons behind the proposal to create an appointed position.
- The current elected structure is dependent upon individuals living in Marin and willing to run for elected office, regardless of qualifications.
- An appointed position would allow for recruiting beyond county borders in attract the highest qualified candidates for a specialized administrative position.