Supervisor Gordon Mar announces Charter Amendment to prevent undemocratic political appointments

[San Francisco] -- At Tuesday’s Board of Supervisors meeting, Supervisor Gordon Mar announced a Charter Amendment for the November 2020 ballot to prohibit the Mayor from appointing declared candidates to the office they’re running for within 90 days of their election.

“Part of why I ran for Supervisor was because of my strong belief that we the people deserve to choose our representatives in free and fair elections,” said Mar. “It’s also why I’ve made strengthening our democracy an early priority in office.”

Mar, who represents District 4 on the Board of Supervisors, was elected in 2018 in the first open race in District 4 in 13 years. The race for District Attorney was similarly the first open race for that office in 110 years -- until it was announced that a candidate for that office will be appointed to it 24 hours before ballots were mailed to voters.

The ACLU of Northern California condemned this action, saying in a statement that “Appointments like these are fundamentally undemocratic and favor candidates who have establishment support, as opposed to allowing the process to run its course and let voters decide in an even playing field.”

“It is plainly undemocratic and wrong to appoint a candidate — any candidate — to the office they’re running for weeks before an election,” said Mar. “We who are democratically elected to serve the people need to trust the people to decide for themselves who is best suited to represent them, without putting our thumb on the scale. I hope that as we work together to bring this Charter Amendment forward and iron out its details, we will.”

In addition to the proposed Charter Amendment, Mar is the Lead Proponent of Proposition F, the Sunlight on Dark Money ballot measure, which seeks to address money in politics and political corruption, and is before the voters for approval this November. He is also the author of “Public Financing 2.0”, the greatest expansion of the City’s public financing program for elections in two decades, that will triple the impact of the program while further amplifying the role of small-dollar donors in local races.
The new Charter Amendment will now go through the drafting process with the City Attorney’s office, where details of the policy changes will be fleshed out, before being introduced to the Board of Supervisors for consideration.

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