

October 28, 2024 Update: November 1, 2024

Billionaire Republicans Buying San Francisco Voters Be Careful What You Wish For, Mayor You Vote For

**Don't Let Wanna-Be Mayors Punch You in the Face!
In the 12 Days Since October 19, Mayor's Race
Contributions Have Reached \$37.2 Million, Up \$2.93 Million
Spending Has Reached \$36 Million, Up \$4.64 Million**

**"TogetherSF Action's" Own "Project 2024—2028" Alarming Plot;
It's Next Step Is Eliminating District Elections for City Supervisors.
Where's a Billionaire Like Mark Cuban When We Need Him?**



Billionaire Mayoral Candidates — trying to buy themselves the gold dome that former-Mayor L. Willie Brown wanted perched above the mayor's office in Room 200 at San Francisco's City Hall.

An [analysis](#) of the third round of campaign finance disclosure reports through October 30 updated on the San Francisco Ethics Commission's web site on November 1 reveals contributions and spending for both the five-candidate race for mayor, and the anti-transparency, anti-open government "*Prop. D*" ballot measure, have increased substantially in the 12-day period since the second round of disclosure reports were made available for the period ending October 19 due on October 24.

Beyond the race to become San Francisco's next mayor on November 5, "*TogetherSF Action's*" ugly four-year "*Project 2024–2028*" scheme starts with handing Mark Farrell a mayor's race victory on November 5, along with passing its "*Prop. D*" heist of democratic citizen oversight of our City's Boards and Commissions. That's their opening gambit. From there, *TogetherSF Action's* "*Project 2024–2028*" seeks to eliminate district-centric elections to the Board of Supervisors, among other nefarious things, hoping to enshrine an even stronger, "*strong mayor.*" We can't let "*TogetherSF*" succeed!

A quick analysis of campaign finance disclosure reports posted on the San Francisco Ethics Commission's web site reveal that aspirants to become San Francisco next mayor, and their various supporting committees, have raised a staggering ~~\$34.3~~ **\$37.2** million, and spent a whopping ~~\$31.4~~ **\$36** million — just through October ~~19~~ **30**, 2024 — to install a "*strong mayor*" system of government in City Hall for the next four years, according to the second round of campaign finance disclosure reports released on Thursday, October 24. Another round of campaign finance disclosure reports were due on Friday November 1, just four days before the November 5 municipal election. My sense is the frantic spending will spiral upwards.

Of the ~~\$34.3~~ **\$37.2** million raised by October ~~19~~ **30** fully ~~\$22.6~~ **\$24.4** million — ~~two-thirds (65.6%)~~ — was raised by supplicants Mark Farrell and Daniel Lurie and their independent expenditure committees. They're billionaires and venture capitalist millionaires hoping to buy themselves the Mayor's Office in Room 200 at City hall, a job that paid Major London Breed \$373,058 in total pay in the fiscal year that ended on June 30, 2024 (excluding fringe benefits).

Who would spend that kind of money to buy themselves a new job that pays a relatively low annual salary, except perhaps sycophants? Unless they're not making as much in their current gigs.

Voters may get a punch in the gut, or a kick in their rear ends, if they elect either Daniel Lurie or Mark Farrell to finally kick Breed out of office. Between the two men, their candidate-controlled plus independent "*primarily formed candidate committees,*" have raised a total of ~~\$22.6~~ **24.4** million, and spent ~~\$20.1~~ **\$23.23** million through October ~~19~~ **30**, 2024. Both men are hell bent on buying themselves political office.

Alternatively, if Breed somehow hangs on to her job, and Kamla Harris also somehow manages to defeat Donald Trump, voters may soon find Breed still won't last long as San Francisco's mayor.

That's because there is credible speculation Harris may tap Breed for a cushy appointment, like a cabinet position or senior administrative position, in a Harris–Walz administration where Breed can do even more harm.

And were that to happen, we'd be right back in search of electing a new mayor for San Francisco inside of 120 to 180 days, and face a special election per our current City Charter to replace Breed all over again.

If Breed survives re-election but is cherry-picked for a Harris administration gig, then San Franciscans would wind up with another “*interim*” mayor via a temporary appointment of whomever is then the president of the Board of Supervisors, depending on which of the odd-numbered District candidates might prevail in their elections on November 5, plus the other five even-numbered District Supervisors who don’t face re-election until November 2026.

I, for one, don’t want to see current D-4 Supervisor Joel Engardio, D-6 Supervisor Matt Dorsey, or D-8 Supervisor Rafael Mandelman elected as the next Board of Supervisors president to replace current Board president Aaron Peskin. And I certainly don’t want to see any of those three men then ascend to becoming interim mayor by virtue of having become Board president to replace Breed’s potential ascension to Washington, D.C. and national politics.

And should current D-2 Supervisor Catherine Stefani win her election to State Assembly District 17, we face replacement of the D-2 Supervisor seat to an interim appointee by our next mayor-elect, whoever wins the November’s mayor’s race. Former Supervisor Michaela Alioto-Pier is already registered to run for the D-2 Supervisor gig in 2025.

It’s completely unclear whether incumbent D-10 Supervisor Shamann Walton could prevail in being internally re-elected Board President by the new crop of six incoming District supervisors and the current crop of even-numbered District supervisors, even though he did a good job when Walton previously served as Board president.

Our November Candidates for Mayor Options

Campaign finance disclosure reports filed by the top five mayoral contenders and independent committees supporting them reveal information voters may want to consider before casting their ballots on November 5. They’re discussed here in the least troubling order.

Supervisor Aaron Peskin

I’ve received just three campaign mailers supporting Peskin for mayor as of Saturday, October 26, 2024. All three were paid for by his candidate-controlled “*Aaron Peskin for Mayor 2024*” committee.

His campaign finance disclosure reports show he had received ~~\$1.97~~ **\$2.16** million in campaign contributions and had spent ~~\$1.43~~ **\$2**-million through October ~~19~~ **30**.

However, on October 24 KQED **reported** Peskin’s campaign arsenal has reached \$2.36 million, including direct contributions to his official campaign, Political Action Committees (PAC’s) supporting his candidacy, and public financing matching contributions from the City.

Peskin strongly supports expanding rent control to another 89,000 rental units, and is a strong supporter of stronger citizen oversight, advocating for both “*Prop. C*” on the November ballot to create an Inspector General position in San Francisco government to combat public corruption, and “*Prop. E*” to preserve desperately needed citizen oversight of the City’s boards and commissions system that “*Prop. D*” seeks to eviscerate. “*Prop. D*” includes getting rid of the Health Commission that oversees San Francisco General Hospital and Laguna Honda Hospital, that “*TogetherSF’s*” CEO Kanishka Cheng wants to eliminate in a misguided effort to curb San Francisco’s fentanyl crisis — which would only worsen the fentanyl crisis, not make it better.

Recommendation: Because one recent poll had shown Peskin was tied in polling with candidate Daniel Lurie, and London Breed and Mark Farrell were polling in distant third and fourth place, I recommend you rank Mr. Peskin as your first-place vote. And then stop, for the many good reasons outlined below. Do **not** rank Breed, Ahsha Safai, Mark Farrell, or Daniel Lurie in any ranked choice positions, as explained below. Leave all four of them off of your ballot.

Mayor London Breed

Breed has started referring to herself as being “*battle-tested*.” She doesn’t seem to get it that most voters believe she has tested our last nerves.

I’ve received just two campaign mailers supporting Breed for mayor as of Saturday, October 25, 2024. Both mailers were paid for by her candidate controlled “*Re-Elect Mayor London Breed 2024*” committee.

Finance disclosure reports show her main candidate campaign had received ~~\$2.27~~ **\$2.3** million in campaign contributions and had spent ~~\$2.16~~ **\$2.24** million through October ~~19~~ **30**.

Also on October 24, KQED reported that Breed's campaign war chest has reached \$4.88 million, including direct contributions to her official campaign, Political Action Committees (PAC's) supporting her main campaign, and from public financing matching contributions from the City.

A campaign e-mail blast from Breed's "*Re-Elect Mayor London Breed 2024*" official campaign on October 28 suddenly started claiming she's "*a battle-tested, proven leader whose work is creating a city on the rise,*" ostensibly deserving re-election. Following onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, there's scant evidence and certainly no proof San Francisco is "*on the rise*" again four years later, from her six-year "*battle-tested*" leadership tenure. She may have missed hearing that San Franciscans and voters are essentially fed up with her brand of "*proven leadership.*"

Worse, she appears to have missed hearing City residents are exhausted from the battles with City Hall corruption that have tested our nerves during her reign, more than anything. After six years as mayor, Breed has been reduced to hyperbole and tired, old clichés that seem to have gotten the best of her.

Voters should not forget that Breed [agreed](#) on August 2, 2021 to settle a San Francisco Ethics Commission fine of \$22,792 related to three ethics violations while in office, the first time a sitting mayor in the City had settled such an Ethics fine. The three violations included Breed having asked then-Governor Jerry Brown in 2018 to commute the prison sentence of her older brother by improperly using her mayoral letterhead for a personal matter; accepting a gift from disgraced Department of Public Works director Mohammed Nuru for repairs to Breed's car; and improperly asking two restaurateurs to each pay \$1,250 directly to the float manufacturer for her float in the City's Pride parade, which contributions were not recorded properly in campaign finance disclosures and exceeded the \$500 limit per person restriction for City candidates. She was fined for failing to disclose the contributions and for accepting money over the legal limit.

Another independent expenditure committee PAC run by Vince Courtney named "*Progress San Francisco*" supporting Breed's 2018 campaign for mayor, also agreed to pay a separate \$29,300 fine, which was among the largest demanded by the Ethics Commission in recent years.

Breed's Ethics Commission fines led, in part, to the arrest and imprisonment of Nuru and restaurateur Nick Bovis in 2020, setting off the FBI's expansive and wide-ranging six-year investigation city government corruption scandal that engulfed San Francisco City Hall and ensnared more than a dozen individuals. Don't forget that the corruption scandal started in 2020 with a federal indictment of former San Francisco Public Works director Mohammed Nuru eventually also ensnared San Francisco Public Utilities Commission General Manager Harlan Kelly, also accused of taking bribes, who received a four-year prison sentence, which was a bit shorter than Nuru's seven-year federal prison sentence — all under Breed's watch.

Given an e-mail blast I received from the "*Re-Elect Breed for Mayor*" committee on October 25, Breed is rightfully recommending voters vote "*No*" on "*Prop. D*" sponsored by "*TogetherSF's*" Kanishka Cheng that would abolish Health Commission oversight of SFGH and Laguna Honda Hospital. But Breed whiffed and also recommended voting "*No*" on "*Prop. E*" designed to do more thoughtful reform of the City's boards and commissions structure, urgently needed to prevent losing the Health Commission. Although there are reports Breed has her own proposal to reform the City's boards and commissions, that plan isn't on the ballot! She can't have it both ways and keep the status quo. And she may have callously recommended voting "*No*" on "*Prop. E*" knowing the Peskin is ahead of her in recent polling.

Breed's predecessor, Mayor Ed Lee who died in 2018, increased the City's budget by \$3.2 **billion** during his six years as mayor — from \$6.8 billion in his first budget submission for fiscal year 2011–2012, to \$10 billion in fiscal year 2017–2018, after he succeeded former-mayor Gavin Newsom. Then, between Lee's last budget submission and Breed's budget submission for the current fiscal year of \$15.9 billion, over the past six years Breed has increased the City's budget by an *additional* \$5.9 billion while mayor, apparently not to be outspent by Lee.

That's a \$9.1 **billion** increase across a mere dozen years — a whopping 133.8% change increase. During her tenure, Breed is responsible for a 59% change increase to the City's budget across just the past six years alone.

It's another reason to boot her from office and not award her any ranked-choice vote.

Recommendation: Given Breed’s proximity to the corruption scandals described above resulting in her Ethics fine, and her extravagant increases to the City’s budget, I recommend that you **not** rank her in any ranked choice ballot position. Leave her off of ranked choice voting completely. That may be the fastest, and surest, way to help clean up corruption in City Hall. Leave her off of your ballot!

Daniel Lurie

I’ve received a somewhat shocking six campaign mailers supporting Lurie for mayor as of Saturday, October 25, 2024. **None** of the six mailers were from Lurie’s candidate-controlled “*Daniel Lurie for Mayor 2024*” committee. Lurie donated \$8 million of his personal fortune to fund his official campaign, but has failed to send **any** mailers to District 3 voters? *Who mounts a campaign for the top elected job in San Francisco and mails no campaign mailers? Who does that?*

Finance disclosure reports show Lurie had received ~~\$8.93~~ **\$9.6** million in campaign contributions — most of it self-funded via his enormous personal fortune, not grassroots support — and had spent ~~\$8.49~~ **\$9.1** million through October ~~19 30~~.

Of note, all six of the mailers supporting Lurie were paid for by an independent committee primarily formed to back a specific candidate, named the “*Believe in SF, Lurie for Mayor 2024*” committee. The “*Believe in SF*” committee has separately received ~~\$6.4~~ **\$6.59** million in campaign contributions and had spent ~~\$5.46~~ **\$6.35** million ~~to date through~~ October ~~19 30~~.

Between Lurie’s candidate-controlled committee and the “*Believe in SF*” independent committee, they’ve received a staggering ~~\$15.33~~ **\$16.19** million in contributions and had spent ~~\$13.95~~ **\$15.45** million through October ~~19 30~~ according to Ethics Commission campaign finance disclosures. That’s undoubtedly the highest spent for any single candidate for mayor in San Francisco history. And in these last 10 days before the November 5 election, Lurie will undoubtedly spend more of his family’s fortune trying to buy himself office.

KQED had reported on October 24, that Lurie’s campaign war chest has reached \$15.72 million, including direct contributions to his official campaign and PAC’s supporting his campaign. He’s apparently not eligible for public financing matching contributions from the City.

Lurie has no job experience working in government. Like Donald Trump, Lurie seems to believe that running a government should be like running a corporation or a non-profit. That’s ludicrous, of course. In my book, Lurie is a Republican, hiding in sheep’s clothing as a Democrat.

Recommendation: We don’t need a billionaire like Lurie buying himself the mayor’s office! Don’t cast any ranked choice for Lurie! Leave him off of your ballot.

Mark Farrell

I have also received zero campaign mailers from Farrell’s official “*Mark Farrell for Mayor 2024*” campaign committee prior to submission of this article on October 28. Who does that? Again, who runs for mayor without their primary candidate-controlled committee sending out mailers “*paid for*” by their official campaign committee?

Ethics Commission campaign finance disclosure reports report Farrell’s official committee had received ~~\$2.25~~ **\$2.45** million in campaign contributions and had spent ~~\$1.95~~ **\$2.24** million through October ~~19 30~~.

But I did receive a whopping 14 mailers in U.S. Mail as of October 25, 2024 — all paid for by the “*Mayor Mark Farrell for Yes on D*” committee bragging somewhat comically of major \$500,000 in funding from billionaire Michael Moritz, claiming “*Prop. D*” is the change needed at City Hall. The mailer ignores the inherent irony — one of the mailers claims “*Prop. D*” is needed because of the “*scandal-ridden Human Rights Commission.*” Farrell ignores his own scandals.

Ethics Commission campaign finance disclosure reports also show Farrell’s “*Prop. D*” committee had separately received ~~\$2.35~~ **\$2.55** million in campaign contributions and had spent ~~\$2.14~~ **\$2.33** million through October ~~19 30~~.

All 14 of the mailers purport only to be begging voters to pass “*Prop. D*” on November 5 — but are coupled with a tacit *implication* voters should also vote for Farrell for mayor at the same time. Farrell is shamelessly abusing his “*Prop. D*” mailers to advance his run for mayor.

The 14 mailers were paid for by an officeholder or candidate-controlled (by Farrell) recipient committee primarily formed to back a specific **ballot measure** — “*Prop. D*” — named the “*Mark Farrell for Mayor Yes on D*” committee. Finance disclosure reports show that the committee had received \$2.35 million in campaign contributions and had spent \$2.34 million through October 19.

Farrell is ignoring his own scandal-ridden corruption allegations. First, voters should not forget former Supervisor Mark Farrell was hit with a \$191,000 Ethics Commission **fine** levied against him in 2014 for improper campaign activities related to his 2010 run for the District 2 seat on the Board of Supervisors.

The fine arose from an allegation that the Ethics Commission sustained asserting Farrell and his campaign consultant, Chris Lee, had illegally coordinated with an independent expenditure committee that spent \$191,000 in the final weeks of the race to defeat Janet Reilly in the District 2 Supervisors election in 2010. Farrell had beaten Reilly by just 258 votes, perhaps due to the improper \$191,000 in spending by the “*independent*” expenditure committee “*Common Sense Voters*” — which had received had just two donations: \$141,000 from real estate magnate Thomas Coates and \$50,000 from prominent socialite Dede Wilsey.

After Farrell sued in April 2016, the fine was negotiated down and settled by Farrell for \$25,000. Farrell is obviously ethically challenged, and intellectually dishonest. His integrity is lacking and he may be up to no good again in his current race for mayor.

Of interest, the same Thomas Coates and his wife Linda Coates have each donated \$250,000 to Farrell’s new “*candidate-controlled*” committee named “*Mark Farrell for Mayor Yes on D*,” the “*TogetherSF*” ballot measure that would cap the number of city commissions at 65 and expand mayoral powers, as previously **reported** in the *Westside Observer*.

It’s not clear what lesson Farrell learned, if any, from his eventual \$25,000 Ethics Commission fine.

What is clear is that Farrell is facing new allegations of campaign finance violations. As the *Westside Observer* **reported** on October 15, three former San Francisco mayors requested that a criminal investigation on October 7 be expedited prior to the November 5 election in an undated formal **letter** signed by former Mayors Art Agnos, Willie Brown, and Frank Jordan to California Attorney General Rob Bonta and to San Francisco District Attorney Brooke Jenkins. Former City Attorney Louise Renne, former Supervisor Angela Alioto, former State Senator Mark Leno, Former Superior Court Judge and former Ethics Commissioner Quentin Kopp, and founding partner John Kecker of the Kecker, Van Nest, and Peters, LLP law firm co-signed the letter requesting an investigation.

The letter alleges a *prima facie* case against Farrell involving funneling hundreds of thousands of dollars from the “*Mayor Mark Farrell for Yes on Prop D*” committee into his separate campaign for mayor, asserting so-called “*shared expenses*” between the two committees. That criminal investigation might prove Farrell was the head of a private criminal plot as a candidate for mayor.

The legal rule is a candidate for elected office is **not** allowed to open a ballot measure committee and use that second committee as a slush fund to support their election to office.

Maybe Farrell didn’t learn a thing from his \$25,000 Ethics fine in 2016, after all. We’ve been warned by political consultant experts: “*When a candidate who’s been busted for ethics violations starts playing fast and loose with campaign finance laws again, watch out.*”

As the *San Francisco Chronicle* **reported** on August 16:

*“While donors can give a maximum of \$500 to a candidate’s [principal] campaign, they can make unlimited contributions to ballot measure committees. By pooling the two pots of funds, Farrell has invited accusations from his political opponents that he’s **launders** money — effectively using the ballot measure committee to circumvent contribution limits and funnel money into his mayoral campaign, which would be illegal.”*

Even mayoral candidate Daniel Lurie asserts San Francisco needs stronger safeguards to prevent candidates from laundering money from their ballot measure account into their official candidate account — a concept apparently foreign to Farrell, and the bad folks at “*TogetherSF Action*” who dreamt up the “*Prop. D*” ballot measure trying to hand Farrell “*strong mayor*” enhanced powers!

No wonder there’s been a call for the campaign violation investigation of Mark Farrell.

According to a September 12 *Mission Local* [article](#), Farrell’s campaign to become San Francisco’s next mayor benefits not only from his “*Mayor Mark Farrell Yes on D*” candidate-controlled ballot measure committee, but also from a new PAC committee “*Safer San Francisco for Mark Farrell for Mayor 2024*” stood up on July 25 by Angus McCarthy, a local developer and former president of the Building Inspection Commission who was accused of violating city permitting requirements.

The new PAC’s ultra-wealthy backers include major funding by the erstwhile aforementioned millionaire Thomas Coates (\$500,000), Republican *billionaire* William Oberndorf (\$450,000), and venture capitalist Kamran Moghtaderi (\$250,000).

Ethics Commission campaign finance disclosure reports show the “*Safer San Francisco for Mark Farrell*” committee has received ~~\$2.675~~ \$3.24 million in campaign contributions and has spent ~~\$2.1~~ \$3.2 million through October ~~19~~ 30

Separate from the 14 mailers I’ve received from the “*Mayor Market Farrell Yes on D*” campaign committee, I’ve also received two mailers (so far) from the “*Safer San Francisco for Mark Farrell for Mayor 2024*” committee. Those mailers didn’t support Farrell’s primary campaign committee or support Farrell’s “*Yes on Prop. D*” committee. Instead, they were attack-ad mailers opposing Daniel Lurie’s campaign. How rich: Billionaires opposing other billionaires!

The mailers falsely and lamely claim Farrell had cleaned up tent encampments in San Francisco while Farrell served as the City’s interim mayor and as D-2 Supervisor, which is utter nonsense — given that Breed struggled well into 2024 to deal with the City’s rampant tent encampments, as everyone paying attention knows all too well.

Between Farrell’s official campaign committee, the “*Mayor Mark Farrell for Prop. D*” committee, and the new “*Safer San Francisco for Mark Farrell*” committee, Ethics Commission campaign finance disclosure reports show the three committees have raised a combined ~~\$7.27~~ \$8.21 million in campaign contributions and have spent ~~\$6.19~~ \$7.78 million through October ~~19~~ 30 — just *half* of Lurie’s war chest.

The real scandal is that Farrell himself is being credibly accused of misusing the “*Mark Farrell for Yes on D*” committee claiming so-called “*shared expenses*” to advance his campaign to become San Francisco’s mayor.

KQED had reported on October 24, that Farrell’s war chest has reached \$4.43 million, including direct contributions to his official campaign, public financing from the City, and PAC’s supporting his campaign. But given the Ethics Commission’s data about the various committees and PACs supporting Farrell, that figure is probably more like \$7.27 million, including the “*Mayor Market Farrell Yes on D*” committee contributions Farrell is creatively trying to funnel through a slush fund into helping out his mayoral campaign, which KQED didn’t include.

On October 3, Farrell and Ahsha Safai announced their unholy alliance to have their respective first-place voters rank each other in second, or another, ranked place hoping to undercut Lurie, Peskin, and Breed. It was done deliberately to primarily keep their second-place ranked choice votes from going to either London Breed or to Aaron Peskin.

The timing was interesting. A mailer I received on October 16 from Farrell’s “*Yes on Prop. D*” campaign committee featured a single union endorsement featuring the logo of the San Francisco Firefighters union. But just six days after Farrell and Safai formed their ranked choice voting alliance, the next mailer I received on October 22 from Farrell’s “*Yes on Prop. D*” committee suddenly started displaying the logo of San Francisco’s Building and Construction Trade Council, a labor union that Safai may have snagged into supporting Farrell’s run for mayor via Farrell’s “*Prop. D*” campaign, perhaps as part of their alliance agreement.

In another *Mission Local* [article published](#) on October 27 long-time political consultant in San Francisco, Jim Ross, said forming alliances is often “*a sign of desperation*” and not “*necessarily an effective campaign tool.*” The alliance is “*meaningless*” for Safai and Farrell, Ross told *Mission Local*.

Both Farrell and Safai are desperate because they both know from recent polling neither of them stand a chance of becoming mayor, even with ranked-choice voting.

That's because, in part, a *San Francisco Chronicle* poll conducted between October 15 and 16 [published](#) on October 21 shows Safai's single-digit 6% share of first-place votes (as many had anticipated) will force his elimination in Round 2 of ranked choice ballot counting. The *Chronicle's* poll shows Farrell's fourth-place 16% likely first-place votes will lead to Farrell's elimination from contention in Round 3. So much for the utility of forming their voting alliance in an act of desperation. The *Chronicle* poll had reported a tie between Breed and Lurie, at 27% each, followed by Peskin in third place at 21%.

Brazenly, an October 28 e-mail blast from Farrell's official campaign falsely asserted "*With less than 8 days to go, the most recent independent polling shows us in a dead heat.*" It was brazen precisely because it contained at least two lies. First, the e-mail blast asserted that the "*most recent polling*" had revealed the mythical "*dead heat.*" Following a link included in the e-mail blast, Farrell was referring to a poll conducted between October 9 and October 19 by Drew Lieberman at LDI Research, in an analysis released on October 20. That wasn't the "*most recent poll,*" as Farrell surely must have known on October 28. The *Chronicle* poll published on October 21 was more recent.

Farrell's second falsehood about the "*dead heat*" conveniently neglected to indicate that the Lieberman poll reported a *functional* three-way tie for *second* place — with Farrell and Lurie tied at 21% and Peskin at 20% (which given the margin of polling error made it a *functional* three-way tie for Peskin). Being tied in **second** place does not a "*dead heat*" make. Lieberman ranked Breed at 25% and poor Safai at just 7%.

But as noted above, the *Chronicle's* poll released the day *after* the Lieberman poll had reported a different "*functional tie*" between Breed and Lurie at 27% each, Peskin at 21%, and Farrell in fourth place at just 16% — five percentage points lower than the Lieberman poll had ranked Farrell at 21%. Among Farrell's other faults, he is apparently OK with spouting misinformation in his campaign e-mail blasts to deceive potential voters!

Recommendation: Farrell ought to just butt out. We don't need billionaires like Lurie trying to buy themselves the mayor's office. Or billionaires like Moritz and Oberndorf trying to buy their puppet Farrell the election. Given Farrell's ethics fine and potential on-going campaign finance Ethics violations, don't cast **any** ranked choice for him! Leave him off of your ballot completely.

Not-a-Chance Asha Safai

Finance disclosure reports show Safai's official campaign committee had received ~~\$1~~ **\$1.37** million in campaign contributions and had spent ~~\$794,279~~ **\$1.06 million** through October ~~19~~ **30**, about half of what the other five main contenders had raised and spent.

Back on July 14, 2016 the *48 Hills* media outlet [published](#) an article about the stories Asha Safai **didn't** tell in his then-campaign for D-11's City Supervisor. *48 Hills* noted "*He's a real-estate speculator, house flipper, and gets almost half of his money from the real-estate industry.*" *48 Hills* also reported that there's a lot about Safai's record that hasn't received much attention, including he's "*a real-estate speculator who made a big chunk of cash buying a house that was in foreclosure and flipping it.*" The "*chunk of cash*" Safai made from flipping the house within a year of purchase may have netted him approximately \$365,000, given details in the *48 Hills* article. In a lawsuit involving the house he purchased with his wife, Safai in legal filings denied all the allegations.

In 2016 Safai described himself as the political director for SEIU Local 87, the janitor's union, but *48 Hills* reported economic interest statements for 2012 and 2013 he filed with the City show he earned less than \$10,000 as political director for Local 87, but more than \$100,000 as the principal in Kitchen Cabinet Public Affairs, a political consulting company.

In practice, Safai is primarily a shill for labor unions. Period.

As recently as mid-October 2024, Safi sought in his capacity as the D-11 Supervisor to delay a piece of legislation Supervisor Peskin had introduced to expand rent control, if repeal of *Costa Hawkins* passes by November's "*Prop. 33*" ballot measure. Safai had raised a last-minute delay to force Peskin to create a new committee to advise City Hall on rent control matters by creating a seat for the San Francisco Building and Constructions Trade Council that represents multiple

unions on a new committee. Safai was essentially trying to sell out his own District 11 constituents, 65% of whom are renters, in order to curry favor with labor unions. Peskin didn't accept Safai's delaying tactic and no new committee was created. Safai eventually voted with the 10 Board of Supervisors members present, and Peskin's rent control legislation passed unanimously.

In an October 11 article about the Safai–Farrell ranked choice voting alliance, the *Mission Local* [asked](#) “*But what’s in it for Safai?*” *Mission Local’s* article continued, writing “*‘A job,’ one source speculated. ‘Maybe the head of some labor union.’*” Phooey. Safai can easily get a cushy union job with San Francisco’s Building and Construction Trades Council without needing an alliance with Farrell.

My take is that since Safai has been D-11 Supervisor for eight years and is now termed out, that’s why he ran for mayor in the first place for his next job.

Safai’s City salary as Supervisor ending June 30, 2024 was \$163,449 in total pay, excluding fringe benefits. Perhaps running for mayor, Safai hoped his next gig would be getting a pay boost to Breed’s current salary of \$373,058. That would have handed him a raise of almost \$200,000 over his current salary. Not bad for someone about to become unemployed.

Alternatively my sense is that by forming his alliance with Farrell, Safai may have wanted to become the next Chief of Staff to a Mayor Mark Farrell, replacing former District 7 Supervisor Sean Elsbernd, who as Breed’s current Chief of Staff earned \$253,040 in salary ending June 30, 2024. That might have handed Safai a nice \$90,000 raise over his current salary, a not dismal salary for Safai’s next gig without waiting in an unemployment line. Who wants a union job when there’s the possibility of staying close to the levers of political power, front and center at City Hall as the Chief of Staff? Who knows if Farrell may have promised Safai a crack at becoming Chief of Staff in a Farrell administration as part of their gentleman’s “*alliance*” agreement?

After all, other observers have noted elsewhere the Safai–Farrell alliance “*is nothing more than insiders protecting insiders as desperation sets in. Protectors of the failed status quo fear the change that Daniel [Lurie] is going to bring to City Hall,*” Lurie campaign consultant Tyler Law has said.

“*If Ahsha goes public with an endorsement of Farrell, he will lose what few votes he already has right now,*” Jim Stearns, a consultant for Peskin’s campaign said. An “*endorsement*” would be bad enough, but striking the alliance may have been more like a final death-knell bell for Safai’s campaign.

The *Mission Local* also reported on October 27 that on Thursday, October 24, Safai — assuming a staffer-like role to introduce Farrell to business owners in the Excelsior — escorted his “*alliance*” pal Farrell through District 11. *Mission Local* reported that Safai said to more than one shop owner, “*My name is Ahsha. I’m running for mayor. This is mia amgio (my friend) Mark. He’s also running for mayor. We are running as a team.*”

Mission Local reported the introduction left most voters surprised, if not confused. Many weren’t familiar with the ranked-choice voting system. The two candidates campaigning together reportedly flummoxed some of the business owners (many of whom may have contributed to Safai’s campaign, and were potentially shocked to see what their donations had belatedly earned them).

What those shop owners may also not understand is that when Safai registered to run for mayor in early 2023, he may have done so intentionally, intending all along to only run as a “*spoiler*” candidate, potentially in order to deliberately hold on to several hundreds of thousands of dollars (\$450,000 ?) in unspent campaign funds in his campaign account, and “*spoil*” Breed’s mayoral re-election chances.

I won’t be surprised if the Safai–Farrell merchant walk stunt on October 24 drives down both candidates’ first-place ranked choice votes even lower. It is sure to backfire on both men.

Recommendation: Don’t cast a ranked choice for Safai, either! He doesn’t stand a snowball-in-hell chance, and is now trying to tilt the election to Farrell, rather than to the other mayoral contenders. Leave him off of your ballot completely! Since the *Chronicle* reliably predicts he’s likely to be eliminated in Round 2 of ballot counting, a vote for Safai is simply a wasted vote.

Warning About *TogetherSF* Action's "Project 2024–2028"

A September 17 *Mission Local* [article](#) uncovered "*TogetherSF's*" 49-page, July 2023 [plan](#) showing the big-money group's plot through 2028 with a \$22 million four-year budget, and its reliance on billionaire Michael Moritz, to completely transform San Francisco's democracy. The presentation details a four-stage plan for "*growing an engaged (and enraged) community.*" Apparently, its plans involve growing community outrage. What?

"*TogetherSF's*" extreme CEO, Kanishka Cheng and her husband Jay Cheng, have stated "*TogetherSF's*" mission is to "*grow and sustain [a] movement of community dissatisfaction,*" using rancor directed at local government.

Wow! Why does "*TogetherSF's*" plans for its "*Project 2024–2028*" sound so eerily reminiscent of, and mirrors, fascist Donald Trump's creepy "*Project 2025*"? through actively fostering political unrest to help them win office by fomenting and capitalizing on voters' anger, promising change?

Kanishka Cheng, Moritz, and Farrell (whose wife Liz sits on "*TogetherSF's*" board alongside Moritz) seem unfazed.

Does Kanishka really hope that rancor and community unrest will achieve her twisted view of running municipal government? Is that what they do in Kanishka's country of origin? Or is this something new she has learned since she emigrated here?

In addition to the first step of passing "*Prop. D*" on November 5, "*TogetherSF*" has set its eyes on running two more ballot measures in future elections. Those will apparently "*reform*" the City's nonprofit contracting system, and reinstate at-large supervisorial elections to replace District-centric supervisorial elections. If they were to pass, you can kiss goodbye having District Supervisors primarily focused on advocating for their own District's constituencies and neighborhoods.

"*TogetherSF*" has crowed that its "*Project 2024–2028*" accomplishments include the 2022 elections of District 4 Supervisor Joel Engardio and District 6 Supervisor Matt Dorsey, ousting "*progressive*" candidates. Next on its list is ousting District 5 Supervisor Dean Preston in the November 5, 2024 election.

You can be sure that so-called "*at-large*" politicians seeking to win a citywide election seat on San Francisco's Board of Supervisors would have to have campaign financing war chests as large as Daniel Lurie's or Mark Farrell's in order to have any hope whatsoever of winning a seat on the Board of Supervisors. Enter billionaires Moritz and Oberndorf, stage left. You can almost hear these billionaires already knocking on potential candidates for Supervisors doors.

To halt "*TogetherSF*" dead in its tracks, voters **must act now** to stop "*TogetherSF*" before it's too late. That includes not casting **any** ranked-choice ballots for Mark Farrell, and voting "*No*" on "*Prop. D*," and "*Yes*" on "*Prop. E*".

We have to start somewhere. Hand "*TogetherSF*" twin defeats on November 5! And be sure to rank Aaron Peskin as your first, and only, ranked-choice preference for mayor. It's up to us to stop "*TogetherSF*" while we have this chance!

Monette-Shaw is a columnist for San Francisco's Westside Observer newspaper, and a member of the California First Amendment Coalition (FAC) and the ACLU. He is a Childless (and catless) Cat Daddy, and voter for 50 years. He operates stopLHHdownsize.com. Contact him at monette-shaw@westsideobserver.com.