Argument for Measure S

Measure S modernizes our charter and streamlines the City's hiring process. Measure S would remove the requirement that the Albany City Council approve the appointment of all department heads and officers, instead giving the City Manager authority to do so. This change would remove the need for City Council approval in hiring the City Clerk, Finance Director/City Treasurer, Community Development Director, Public Works Director, Police Chief, Fire Chief, and Recreation and Community Services Director. The appointment of the City Attorney would remain subject to Council approval. This change would ensure the City matches the best practices of other jurisdictions; of the 14 cities in Alameda County, all but three, including Albany, provide their City Manager appointment authority over officers and department heads. This change will make hiring easier by streamlining the process and ensure the retention of qualified City Managers. Currently, the necessity to bring any appointment to the City Council needlessly slows down the hiring process; a process that is already difficult due to the struggle attracting qualified candidates at this level and making a competitive offer before they take another job. These challenges recently precluded the City Council from appointing a new Finance Director, as the process was not fast enough and the most qualified candidate accepted another offer. This change will also ensure the City Manager has the authority needed to effectively manage their staff and implement the Council's direction. While in theory the vetting of candidates by the City Council adds another step of accountability, in practice, the recommendations of the City Manager have been followed every occasion on record, reflecting the thorough vetting and high qualifications required by the traditional hiring process as well as the importance of the City Manager's confidence in a candidate. Please join us and vote yes on Measure S.

/s/ John Miki, Mayor
/s/ Robin López, Vice Mayor
/s/ Jennifer Hansen-Romero, City Councilmember
/s/ Preston Jordan, City Councilmember
/s/ Aaron Tiedemann, City Councilmember