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# **SFPOA RENEWS CALL FOR ALL S.F. POLICE OFFICERS TO BE EQUIPPED WITH TASERS**

## ***New Poll Shows 68% of S.F. Voters Support Tasers***

SAN FRANCISCO – The San Francisco Police Officers’ Association is renewing its call for all San Francisco police officers to be equipped electronic control devices, or “Tasers,” which according to a new poll is supported by 68% of San Francisco voters. These decisive findings come as the City’s Police Commission is considering whether to change policy and allow officers to use Tasers.

“It’s now crystal clear that San Franciscans support giving police officers these necessary tools in order to keep our community safe,” said Martin Halloran, president of the SFPOA. “It’s proven that Tasers save lives and prevent injuries by giving officers a nonlethal option to use in a dangerous situation when other de-escalation techniques have failed.”

A polling firm, Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz and Associates, completed 500 telephone interviews with likely November 2016 voters in San Francisco in both English and Chinese from March 3-10. According to a memo from the pollster (attached), the survey found “strong voter support for equipping police officers with Tasers (68%)” as well as “consistent majorities of voters indicating they feel police officers are effective, hardworking, trustworthy, and empathetic toward residents.”

A Taser fires two wired probes that overrides the subject’s motor and sensory systems. Halloran said that, if properly used, Tasers can save lives and significantly reduce injuries to officers, suspects, and the general public.

The SFPOA submitted its Taser policy to the Police Commission on February 10, 2016. The policy would also require that all officers be trained in crisis intervention and that each patrol car be equipped with a defibrillator.

The SFPOA has previously petitioned the Police Commission to allow SFPD officers to carry Tasers in 2009 and 2011. Halloran said both times its efforts were denied because the Commission deferred to a small minority of anti-Taser activists over the recommendations of the union, policing experts, and two successive police chiefs, Heather Fong and George Gascon.

Halloran says that community support of Tasers has increased since the December fatal shooting in the Bayview of a stabbing suspect who refused to drop his knife and surrender to police officers.

“Based on what we know, if our officers had Tasers on the night of the Bayview shooting,” said Halloran, “that incident may have ended without the loss of a human life.”

San Francisco is one of only two major cities in the United States that does not allow officers to carry Tasers.

“It’s time for City Hall to change its policy,” said Halloran. “Now, with the support the of the majority of San Francisco residents, we are optimistic that the Commission will approve this lifesaving tool.”

The poll also found that 84% of San Francisco voters agree that “San Francisco police officers are hard-working and care about their jobs,” and that 70% trust San Francisco police officers “a great deal” or “a fair amount.”

District Attorney George Gascon did not fare as well in the poll. The poll found that between Gascon, Mayor Ed Lee, and the Board of Supervisors, Gascon had the lowest favorability rating with voters: 23%.