

From: [Andary, Sophia \(HRC\)](#)
To: [commissionstreamlining](#)
Cc: [Andary, Sophia \(HRC\)](#); [DOSW, DOSW \(WOM\)](#)
Subject: Support for the Commission on the Status of Women
Date: Sunday, September 14, 2025 4:55:45 PM

Dear Commission Streamlining Task Force,

I'm writing not just as a Commissioner on the San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women, but as someone whose life experiences have shaped a deep commitment to justice, equity, and public accountability.

I am a queer, Lebanese American woman, a war survivor, an activist, and a community leader. These parts of my identity are not just personal; they guide the work I do every day. I became a commissioner because I believe in real democracy, and that means making sure the people most affected by policies have a seat at the table. I co-founded and helped lead the Women's March San Francisco in 2017 because I could see the rise of fascism coming, and I knew silence wasn't an option. That same urgency drives me today, locally and nationally.

Everyday people must be involved in holding power accountable, especially now. We need more voices from within our communities in government, not fewer. We need to remove barriers, not create new ones. And we cannot silence or sideline the voices of women, girls, and gender-expansive people by weakening or consolidating the Commission on the Status of Women.

The Commission was created in 1975 after years of advocacy and a vote by the Board of Supervisors. Since then, it has taken the lead on gender equity in the city. The Commission is charged with enacting the CEDAW Ordinance, pushing forward efforts to end gender-based violence, and providing oversight to critical bodies like the Mayor's Anti-Sex Trafficking Task Force and the Family Violence Council. We also track the city's progress on equity, including goals like the 30x30 framework for law enforcement and gender representation in public leadership.

But despite decades of work, San Francisco still has a long way to go. Women, girls, and gender-expansive people are still fighting for basic rights, from safety to pay equity to bodily autonomy. This Commission is the **only city body** with the authority to focus specifically on gender equity and make real policy recommendations, review budgets and grants, and demand accountability.

What we offer is more than reports and hearings. We offer access. We are a space where community members can show up, speak out, and be heard. Our Commission is small, but it is one of the most diverse in the city, and that diversity is not symbolic. It's essential. It brings depth, truth, and real-life expertise to the work we do.

We need more of that, not less.

I strongly urge the Task Force to keep the Commission on the Status of Women as an independent body, with its full powers, governance authority, and nominating role intact. These aren't optional features; they are what make the Commission effective and meaningful. We cannot allow unilateral power to dismantle the very structures that protect our democracy. Checks and balances exist for a reason, and independent oversight is essential to fair and accountable government.

Please don't take away one of the only dedicated spaces in our city for women, girls, and nonbinary people to be seen, heard, and represented in government.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Thank you,
Sophia Andary [Pronouns: She/Her/Hers]
Commissioner, Commission on the Status of Women
City and County of San Francisco