

From: [REDACTED]
To: [commissionstreamlining](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Support for the San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women
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Dear Commission Streamlining Task Force,

The San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women is needed now, perhaps more so than ever before in its decades-long history, and we urge members of the Commission Streamlining Task Force to maintain it as a standalone body with its full powers intact.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, California women who are full-time wage and salary workers still earn significantly less than men. The Chamber of Commerce in 2024 even found that San Francisco is among the cities with the largest gender pay gaps—over \$20,000.

Financial concerns can compound threats to healthcare, including medication access, as well as to housing, and many other basic needs. These problems, in turn, can threaten childcare and also put women at greater risk of sexual abuse both within their personal and professional lives.

Women are often the caregivers in families, providing the grounding for neighborhoods and entire communities. There is very little support for women who must take care of older relatives, and with San Francisco having one of the largest aging populations according to the U.S. Census Bureau, related challenges are only going to increase in the future.

Sex trafficking, maternal mortality, attacks on LGBTQ+ women, problems related to Project 2025, and uncertainty over Equal Rights Amendment protections are just some of the other threats women face now.

As Jennifer Siebell Newsom says, "Women are being attacked on so many fronts by [the Trump] Administration, from reproductive freedom and access to care, to cuts to the public institutions that support families—like our parks, libraries, and schools."

While we fully support accountability, sound financial management, and sensible streamlining of operations—problems that we too face as small business owners—we are very disheartened that the San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women is now having to fight for its survival.

The Commission over the years has secured millions of dollars in grant funding for dozens of community-based organizations that provide everything from transitional housing to legal assistance. It has passed groundbreaking anti-discrimination legislation, and serves as a national model for addressing human trafficking and family violence.

What happens here in San Francisco now will therefore have powerful repercussions, not only

throughout the Bay Area, but also nationwide.

Mayor Daniel Lurie has stated that the late great Senator Dianne Feinstein was a role model, and it was with her leadership that the initial Commission on the Status of Women flourished before the Department on the Status of Women became permanent, by a City Charter, in 1994.

Senator Feinstein once said, "I recognize that women have had to fight for everything they have gotten, every right."

And so we are fighting now to preserve the San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women, including its independent voice, governance authority, and nominating power.

Sincerely,

Dr. Betty L. Sullivan and Jennifer L. Viegas, Publishers of the *San Francisco Bay Times*

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