



October 2, 2025

Chair Ed Harrington and Members
Commission Streamlining Task Force
1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102
Emailed to: CommissionStreamlining@sfgov.org
CC: rachel.alonso@sfgov.org

Re: Recommendations to Strengthen the San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission (IRC)

Dear Commission Streamlining Task Force Chair and Members,

On behalf of Chinese for Affirmative Action (CAA), we write to express our support for maintaining the independence of the Immigrant Rights Commission (IRC) and strengthening its role to better protect San Francisco's immigrant residents. CAA was founded in 1969 to protect the civil and political rights of Chinese Americans and to advance multiracial democracy in the United States. Today, CAA is a progressive voice in and on behalf of the broader Asian American and Pacific Islander community.

CAA is a proud member of several citywide immigrant rights coalitions, including the San Francisco Immigrant Legal and Education Network (SFILN), San Francisco Rapid Response Network (SFRRN) and we serve as the anchor organization for the Language Access Network of San Francisco (LANSF) and the Immigrant Parent Voting Collaborative (IPVC). Together we work collaboratively in these multilingual, multiethnic, and multicultural networks of local community-based organizations to make San Francisco a more just, inclusive and welcoming city.

For the past 28 years, the Immigrant Rights Commission has played an important and unique role in advocating for the rights of San Francisco residents and workers, and remains a strong voice that informs the Mayor and Board of Supervisors on policies and issues in partnership with the Office of Civic Engagement and Immigrant Affairs (OCEIA) staff. The IRC established and cultivated trust between our immigrant communities and local government, sharing resources with newcomers, preserving culture, enhancing civic participation, and evaluating resource allocation to respond to the community needs.

CAA has worked closely with the IRC to address immigrants' access to City public services, particularly around language accessibility. CAA played a critical role in advocating for San

Francisco's first language access law, the Language Access Ordinance (LAO), which passed in 2001. Since then, the IRC has been instrumental in overseeing implementation of the LAO and ensuring City agencies comply with the law. Over the years, the IRC has collaborated with immigrant communities by regularly meeting with and inviting partners such as CAA to provide policy updates and presentations on issues affecting immigrant communities in San Francisco—from language access and immigrant parent voting to the racially motivated hate incidents targeting AAPI communities during the pandemic. Most recently, CAA partnered with the IRC to expand and strengthen language rights for residents with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), ensuring that City agencies provide equal access to services regardless of the language spoken. We urge the Streamlining Task Force Commission to recommend that the IRC play a more active and critical role in assessing and evaluating the City's compliance with LAO and to consider revisions to both the ordinance and OCEIA's responsibilities.

Given the expansion of federal immigration enforcement, it is critical to have a commission that can amplify the needs of vulnerable communities and work with the city to provide effective services and protect its residents. We urge the Streamlining Task Force Commission to maintain the IRC as an independent commission and strengthen it by ensuring it receives the needed staffing and resources to deepen its impact in overseeing implementation of the LAO and to better meet the diverse, urgent needs of our immigrant communities.

We thank you and your staff for your consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Andy', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Policy Manager
Chinese for Affirmative Action (CAA)