

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Lurie, Daniel \(MYR\); commissionstreamlining](#)  
**Subject:** We need for SF to learn firsthand from people with disabilities and seniors.  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 14, 2025 10:13:51 PM

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Dear Mayor Lurie,

The first purpose of this letter is to say: Do not combine or cut city commissions. That only adds to grief and potential abuses of vulnerable people. There is no rational reason to deny mostly volunteer work. We welcome it.

As a blind woman, I must weigh in here. We need MORE, not less help in SF and combining or getting rid of any commissions is not helpful. We already have no known direct access to you, though you show up for photo ops all over the place. Our voices, as disabled people or as seniors, appears not be of interest to you.

People learn about other cultures by spending time with them and trying to understand their needs but as far as I can tell, you have no interest, or maybe it's that those in your office are acting as middle people; obstacles to contact with you rather than facilitators .

I've multiple times requested a meeting with you so. you might learn directly from a blind person what might be going right and what might be going wrong in this city for us. I'd hope that would be of interest to you.

Lighthouse for the Blind does NOT represent our needs. It used to but then was gutted by the greed of a few, as you should know. You did not renew the contract the greedy ones at the top would not adjust after the contract was up. I think that was appropriate.

While blind people in SF and throughout the greater region used to have access to important help, mostly through peer teaching, after the top few administrators at Lighthouse blew through the huge \$125,000,000 donation just a few years ago, and most of the rest of the money from grants, now we have a building serving mostly just the few administrators at the top while in September most of the (blind and/or low vision) staff was canned. They were making some fraction of what the high admins were making, but providing such helpful service. Now Lighthouse is falling apart, not even getting me the newsletter, and not helping out the Talking Books and Braille Center at the SF Public Library (Main) to get the info to the rest of us when they don't. TBBC, by the way, is an EXCELLENT resource, just fantastic and helpful in every way one might hope, including finding info for me as I cannot traverse websites since things are blown up on my computer so that I have a chance to write and read some of email with my little residual sight.

We don't need Lighthouse to disappear, but we need it to be cleaned out of irresponsible people, and to have oversight, but we also need to keep that building as it is more accessible than most buildings, and the location allows more people to access it in person. We need a lot of it to be remodelled as housing for the blind and other disabled poeple.

Things are so bad with Lighthouse now that, it's over 6 months' wait for basic white cane training. The Dept. of Rehab person told me it's many months' wait for cane training and navigation and later I was told that they go through Lighthouse so that means over 6 months. We have been truly thrown under the bus by these few people who had lavish parties and otherwise blew the money someone donated to make blind people's lives better. Now, people new to blindness (sometimes it happens overnight), cannot even get cane training, one of the most basic needs. As a result, they will be home alone in many cases. Just think about it: You wake up blind, which happened to me. Briefly, I regained a little sight before it all went downhill for good, now to just a bit remaining but worsening steadily. That bit helps me function, but the first thing I did was get a white cane and though I had no idea what else to do, my local children snapped into action and helped me so I learned basics quickly with their physical help. But many live alone and do not have family nearby to help. In my case, I need advanced navigation training as it's clear I'll be totally blind again. But it will be some long wait.

We need Lighthouse in some form to continue after getting rid of the greed. And we need that building. We need most of the building to be converted into housing for low income disabled people who are in many ways more vulnerable than simply seniors.

I'd heard that the Disability Cultural Center had apts. for low-income disabled people but when I went in, I learned that the few units were snapped up long before but that there were many empty BMR units in the building. BUT... those require at least \$50,000 in income. Even while raising 4 children, I never had more than half that, Disability was a primary reason. And what about people on SSI? or the fact that if you are on SSI you can have no savings or assets beyond \$2000 (less than rents)? I could not get SSI for that reason, and Social Security has \$247 a month planned for me (if it is not also gutted).

What is rotten is that Disability Cultural Center in a great location near other resources we need I guess will get filled up with perfectly healthy people who have the ability to earn money to pay obscene rents, and they may get a break there. Admittedly, I do not know how that works there, but the point is that many disabled people's lives could be made a bit or a lot easier by living in that beautiful building, in a great location. It's another thing being kept from us.

I know SF and Bay Area cities all around don't plan on building housing but it's the cities' governments' very fault in allowing the blowing up of rents, pushing people who actually care about our cities (vs. just using them before moving on to other places in the U.S. and knocking people out of their homes due to rents being driven up during those explosions). Now all around the U.S. cities need to build what in European cities is called Social Housing. Get the developers out of the picture and build humane and pleasant housing that is good for people's mental and emotional health, as well as physical health.

SF and neighboring cities owe us this much after reaming us out. In 1989 my then-boyfriend and I debated paying \$550 for the tiny apt. ultimately we rented because that was above market rate. We chose it, as people do, because it met our needs relating to our logistics. Again, that was above market rate. Prices now have nothing to do with natural progression, or a more natural inflation. It has to do with cities being handed over to developers (not to mention City Manager governments as one of the problems).

The city needs to step up and become the builders and maintenance people who will keep the buildings in good repair, as an investment longterm in people, the residents who make the

city.

I look forward to you deciding to put city money into converting Lighthouse into needed disabled people's low-income housing. Talk about getting political points from the many in the city who actually do wish well for those less economically fortunate than themselves who face hardships in facing extra challenges due to disabilities.

We need safe housing in central locations. For those who are blind, the Lighthouse location is ideal, close to any services they still do have, close to the TBBC at the library, close to the Dept. of Rehab., close to the Disability Cultural Center, close to BART and buses and trollies, etc.

Sincerely,

Maxina Ventura

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.