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November 3, 2025

Ed Harrington, Chair  
Commission Streamlining Task Force  
c/o City Administrator's Office  
City Hall, Room 316  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102-4694

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**"CGOBOC has enough on its plate without being forced to take on additional duties."**

**Don't move SFMTA's revenue bond oversight to CGOBOC!"**

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Re: Citizens' General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee (CGOBOC)

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Dear Chair Harrington and Commission Streamlining Task Force Members,

The Staff Discussion submitted to the Streamlining Task Force notes that the general obligation bonds that CGOBOC oversees differ in several ways from SFMTA's revenue bonds, and admits that combining oversight of both types of bonds into a single oversight body would only provide *partial* oversight of the City's debt financing. Despite that admission, the Staff recommends the Streamlining Task Force might wish to expand CGOBOC's scope to include taking over the SFMTA revenue bond oversight functions anyway — despite only providing partial bond oversight!

The Citizen's General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee's (CGOBOC) existing scope of duties includes oversight of billions of dollars in general obligation bond debt, monitoring the City employee's whistleblower program, and oversight of audits the City Controller's City Services Auditor Division performs. CGOBOC has enough on its plate without being forced to take on additional duties.

And because the City will continue to issue general obligations voters must approve for the City's capital infrastructure projects indefinitely, it is unlikely CGOBOC will ever be driven out of business, and sunsetted.

### **No Longer Borderline Inactive**

The City Administrator's Staff recommendation memo to the Streamlining Task Force falsely asserts on page 11 that CGOBOC may be "*borderline inactive*" because CGOBOC had three vacancies of nine seats in May 2025 (33% vacant). That's obviously outdated information on which to base a decision — now six months later!

The Staff memo is wrong, because it was referring to out-of-date information from May 2025. The Board of Supervisors approved appointment of Benjamin Tingle to CGOBOC's Seat 3 on October 21, 2025; CGOBOC appears to now have only two vacancies, at a rate of 22%. It no longer meets your narrow definition of being borderline inactive.

The solution isn't eliminating any body due to vacancies. The solution is to expand recruitment and fill vacancies!

### **Member Qualifications**

Finally, the Staff recommends the Streamlining Task Force should also consider converting CGOBOC's seat-level requirements into merely "*desirable*" qualifications to broaden the applicant pool and give appointing authorities greater flexibility in filling vacancies. Again, this citizen oversight is not about providing any appointing authorities with greater flexibility, which may well lead to just more corruption in City government. Do you think San Franciscans aren't attenuated to the problems with corruption at City Hall?

Both the Mayor and Board of Supervisors must each include one appointee to CGOBOC active in a business organization representing the City's business community, one appointee active in a labor organization, and one appointee active in a community organization. One of the City Controller's appointees must be someone with expertise in auditing governmental financial statements or public finance law, and the other appointee must have expertise in construction management. The Civil Grand Jury appointee must be a current or former member of the Civil Grand Jury or a Grand Jury designee. No City employee, official, vendor, contractor, or consultant performing work funded by City-

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issued bonds may serve on CGOBOC. The qualifications for appointment to the CGOBOC should **not** be changed just to offer the appointing authorities *carte blanche* “flexibility.”

Voters approved creating and expanding CGOBOC twice, once with “*Prop. F*” in March 2002 and again with “*Prop. C*” in 2003, so changes require going back to the voters.

Again, don’t keep trying to fix what ain’t broken. Just leave CGOBOC’s member qualifications just as they currently are.

## Member Terms Inequality

There seems to be contradictory recommendations from the City Administrator’s support staff. The “*Recommendations Memo*” recommends on page 14 increasing CGOBOC members term lengths from two years to three years, but then doesn’t recommend allowing CGOBOC members to serve for four three-year terms, for a total length of service of 12 years, as has been this Streamlining Task’s usual-and-customary practice for other Advisory Committees. But by contrast, the Staff’s PowerPoint presentation states on page 26 that you retain the two-term limit — which suggests CGOBOC members would only serve for a total of only 6 years, rather than 12 years. They too seem to be being cheated out of the total length of time they can serve, compared to other bodies being allowed 12-year maximum term limits. Why are you applying different standards to CGOBOC members? After all, your “*Advisory Committees*” template specifically allows members to serve 12 years total, and it is very unlikely CGOBOC will ever be sunsetted, even if you force a mandatory sunset date on them.

Not only do CGOBOC members face a long learning curve to earn their member duties, many of the bonds they oversee are actively overseen for six or more years, suggesting it is better to have CGOBOC members serve longer terms to retain continuity of historical oversight of a given bond.

## Sunset Date

The staff recommended the Streamlining Task Force align CGOBOC to the advisory committee template by also establishing a three-year sunset date. That’s unnecessary, as it is highly improbable that the City will simply stop issuing any future general obligation bonds for voter approval, and voters will expect to see CGOBOC continue providing that oversight. In fact, City officials always place in the legal text of G.O. bonds put before voters that CGOBOC will perform that oversight, to entice voters into passing the G.O. bond measures. Sunsetting CGOBOC also makes no sense!

The need for a body performing independent citizen oversight of bond spending is not going to go away, given that issuing G.O. bonds will also never go away as a crucial component and the pillar of the City’s debt financing options.

Indeed the Streamlining Task Force has broken its own rules and granted exceptions to **not** sunset other advisory bodies housed, in the Administrative Code. This Task Force should issue an additional sunset date exemption for CGOBOC!

Sincerely,

/s/

Patrick Monette-Shaw

cc: Rachel Alonso, Project Director, City Administrator’s Office

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