



San Francisco League of Conservation Voters

December 8, 2025

Dear Chair Harrington and Members of the Streamlining Task Force:

The San Francisco League of Conservation Voters writes to express our strong support for maintaining the Commission on the Environment as a decision-making body with full authority over environmental policy, funding, and implementation oversight.

Since 1980, our all-volunteer organization has worked to promote environmental protection through active participation in San Francisco's political system. Our mission encompasses not just environmental issues but also good government and political integrity. The Commission on the Environment represents a model of good governance that advances both of these core values.

The Commission's role is particularly critical for the policy priorities we champion: robust public transit, climate action, housing that reduces sprawl and car dependence, and protecting San Francisco's natural resources including the Bay itself. These priorities require coordinated action across multiple city departments – precisely what the Commission's authority enables.

The Commission also exemplifies the "good government" principles central to our mission. Its open meetings, documented votes, and public accountability stand in stark contrast to advisory processes that happen behind closed doors. When the Commission makes a decision, San Franciscans can see exactly who voted which way and why. This transparency is essential for political integrity. A Commission with real authority forces elected officials to defend their environmental choices publicly and ensures that short-term political calculations don't override long-term environmental commitments.

The proposed change to advisory status would eliminate accountability without producing meaningful efficiency gains. The Commission would still meet; however, it simply wouldn't be able to ensure its recommendations are followed. **This creates the illusion of environmental oversight while gutting its substance.**

We also note that the Commission advances environmental justice, ensuring that communities already burdened by pollution have a voice in decision-making and access to environmental

resources. Advisory recommendations about equity are easy to deprioritize. Decision-making authority ensures that environmental justice remains centered in city policy.

We urge you to preserve the Commission's authority. Good government requires real accountability, and real accountability requires real power. The Commission provides both.

Thank you for your commitment to improving San Francisco's governance. We hope you will conclude that effective environmental protection and government efficiency are not in tension—they both require strong, accountable institutions like the Commission on the Environment.

Sincerely,

Christopher Pederson
President
San Francisco League of Conservation Voters