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December 10, 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

"The '*unitary executive*' theory claims the Mayor may fire nearly anyone who leads a San Francisco City Department, or Board and Commission. San Franciscans reject that theory."

Re: Handing the Mayor Sole Authority Over Commissions — **No Kings or Unitary Executives in San Francisco!**

"Your decisions to date show you are colluding to implement the agenda of SPUR, in order to hand nearly exclusive, greatly expanded '*unitary executive*' powers to a '*strong mayor*' form of local government."

Dear Chair Harrington and Commission Streamlining Task Force,

The "*unitary executive*" theory claims the Mayor may fire nearly anyone who leads a San Francisco City Department, or Board and Commission. San Franciscans reject that theory.

A review of the Streamlining Task Force's now 30-page "***Decision Log***" containing initial decisions the Task Force has made between September 2025 and December 3, 2025 shows drastic changes you are recommending that far exceed what the voters who passed "*Proposition E*" had empowered this Streamlining Task Force to do.

Of the 83 bodies you have recommended so far be kept, your "*Decision Log*" reveals your collective, underlying "*agenda*" is to impose drastic restructuring of San Francisco's Boards and Commissions that the backers and proponents had initially proposed in "*Proposition D*" — that voters soundly rejected at the ballot box.

Your decisions to date show you are colluding to implement the agenda of SPUR, in order to hand nearly exclusive, and greatly expanded "*unitary executive*" powers to a "*strong mayor*" form of local government, which is not what "*Prop. E*" voters had impaneled you to do.

Among your adopted recommendations, Francisco's boards and commissions will change radically, including:

- 21 will be moved from the City Charter to the Administrative Code
- 25 will be kept in or added to the Administrative Code
- 14 will be kept as governance bodies
- At least 4 will be converted to being an advisory body only
- At least 7 will be stripped of authority to submit three-nominee short lists for department head selection; they'll be reduced to having "*consultative roles only*." [**Note:** Although SPUR asserted 21 boards and commissions submit candidate and nominee short lists, City Administrator staff have only mentioned 7 "*short lists*" in the staff recommendations, and in Task Force meeting minutes.] The actual motions made by Task Force members show they have been unconcerned about being crystal clear on what they were voting on. Their actual "*motions*" made have been very sloppy, and all over the map when it comes to *Roberts Rules of Order*.
- 21 will lose their authority to hire and fire department heads, and will be reduced to having "*consultative roles only*," but now only on an "***optiona***l" basis, suggesting they may not be allowed to participate in department head selection at all
- Only 11 will retain authority to hire and fire their respective department heads
- 20 are recommended for changing removal of commission member appointees from ***for-cause* only** to ***at-will*** removal
- At least 4 will have their budget approval and contract approval authority removed
- 12 will have a mandatory sunset date applied to them, threatening their very existence in the future
- 20 are having their member nominations and qualifications changed, and nearly all of them will become only "*desirable*" member qualifications, not "*mandatory*" qualifications; they will be applied as *body-level*, qualifications, not *seat-level* qualifications.

- At least 4 other bodies are having their member qualifications eliminated entirely, further opening up appointments to those bodies to political patronage appointments

San Franciscans Opposition to Date

This Streamlining Task Force's efforts to hand "*unitary executive*" powers to San Francisco's Mayor is operating in parallel with similar efforts by SPUR.

It's almost certain that San Franciso's voters will not endorse — and will probably reject — the nakedly partisan recommendations you have approved so far. The momentum of citizen opposition — 1,027 opponents, including 397 public speakers through November 9, and 629 written letters submitted, nearly all of which have been opposing decisions this Task Force has been making so far — suggests voters will reject whatever you place on the ballot in November 2026 to change our City Charter. The momentum of those 1,027 voices will only grow louder and stronger by November 2026, at your peril!

It's instructive that this Task Force's tenuous legitimacy and rank partisanship has nobody surprised, because the overwhelming evidence that has emerged so far shows your true colors. What is particularly galling about your decisions is that under historical precedents in San Francisco, you should be giving significant deference to San Franciscans, who you are all but ignoring, along with wishes of San Francisco voters.

That assessment may be far too kind. This Task Force knows exactly why — as do the rest of us — that the conservative bent of SPUR is driving this so-called "*streamlining*" — San Franciscan's wishes be damned. The law is no longer the law. The law — and our civic democracy — is being reduced to whatever is good for SPUR and Mayor Lurie.

No Unitary "Strong Mayor"! Re-empower our Boards and Commissions

What this Streamlining Task Force is recommending is frighteningly similar to the Supreme Court *Trump v. Slaughter* case heard on Monday, December 8. *Slaughter* involves a struggle over presidential power over hiring and firing of federal agency department heads, and removal of board members. The case is expected to strip Congress of most of its power to create "*independent*" federal agencies that have some freedom to act in ways that the president may not like

As Vox senior correspondent Ian Millhiser has **reported** "*The precise issue before the Court in* Slaughter *is whether President Donald Trump may fire Rebecca Slaughter, one of five commissioners on the Federal Trade Commission. By law, members of the FTC may only be removed for inefficiency, neglect of duty, or malfeasance in office.' But Trump does not claim that Slaughter was neglectful or malfeasant. Instead, he believes her views are 'inconsistent with my Administration's priorities'*."

The involves a something known as the "unitary executive," a legal theory that asserts a single line in the U.S. Constitution states, "*the executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America*." President Trump and the Republican majority on the Supreme Court are trying to twist that single reference into meaning not just **some** of executive power, but ***all*** of the executive powers.

As Millhiser noted, "*One problem with this unitary executive theory is that it is far from clear which governmental powers should qualify as "executive*."

Millhiser observed: "*The Court, in other words, is fundamentally reworking the balance of power among the three branches* ***based on vague constitutional provisions and dubious legal theories*** *with little grounding in history*."

The premise of the unitary executive is that the power to control federal agencies rests with the president and the president alone.

This Task Force is making the same erroneous argument that the power to control San Francisco agencies, City Departments and our boards and commissions rests with the mayor, and a unitary "*strong mayor*" alone.

San Franciscans want a semblance of a *balance of power* between our Boards and Commissions and the mayor. Re-empower out boards and commissions!

San Franciscans reject the "*unitary executive*" theory. We don't want the Mayor to have authority to fire nearly anyone who leads a San Francisco City Department, or Board and Commission. San Franciscans reject that theory.

You should revisit your decisions to date, and reverse most of them. Otherwise, your efforts will have been in vain, when they fail to pass at the ballot box.

Sincerely,

/s/
Patrick Monette-Shaw

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

Commission Streamlining Task Force's Major Decisions on 83 Bodies Kept From 150 Boards and Commissions Evaluated

During Five "*Policy Topic Area*" Meetings of the Streamlining Task Force: September 3 Through December 3, 2025

(81 Bodies Were Recommended to Be "*Kept.*", 3 Bodies were combined with another body, and one is scheduled to be "*Sunsetted*" by the Board of Supervisors in mid-2026)

Updated List: As of **12/9/2025**

Please Check Back
This List Will Be Updated Between
December 16 January 16

	Board or Commission	Keep in Charter	Keep as Governance	Move From Charter to Administrative Code	Add to or Keep in Admin Code	Make or Convert to Advisory Body?	Transfer Decisions to Dept. Staff	Remove Nominating Ability or 3-Name Short List for Hiring Dept. Head?	Retain Dept Head Hiring and Firing Authority	Remove Dept Head Hiring & Firing Authority	Continue Serving At-Will	Change From For-Cause Removal to At-Will	Retain Budget Approval	Remove Budget & Contract Authority	Don't Apply a Sunset Date	Apply 3-Year Sunset Date	Remove Member Seat Quals	Update Member Seat Quals or Make "Desirable" Body-Level	Remove Qualifications
	Toral:	21	14	21	25	4	1	7	11	24	1	20	1	4	21	12	3	20	4
1	Abatement Appeals Board																		
2	Airport Commission	■	■							■		■						■	
3	Arts Commission														■			■	
4	Asian Art Commission	■							■			■							
5	Assessment Appeals Board				■														
6	Ballot Simplification Committee			■											■			■	
7	Behavioral Health Commission											■			■				
8	Board of Appeals	■							■										
9	Building Inspection Commission			■						■								■	
10	Cannabis Oversight Committee				■														
11	Capital Planning Committee																		
12	Child Care Planning & Advisory Council				■										■				
13	Children and Families First Commission			■						■			■						
14	Children, Youth and Their Families Oversight and Advisory Committee			■						■	■				■			■	
15	Citizens' General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee				■										■			■	
16	Civil Service Commission	■							■								■		■
17	Code Advisory Committee			■															
18	Commission of Animal Control and Welfare			■								■				■		■	
19	Commission on the Environment			■		■				■				■		■			
20	Commission on the Status of Women			■						■		■		■	■				
21	Commission Streamlining Task Force	?		?															
22	Committee on City Workforce Alignment				■														
23	Committee on Information Technology (COIT)																		
24	Community Corrections Partnership				■										■				
25	Disability and Aging Commission, Advisory Council to														■	■		■	
26	Disability and Aging Services Commission		■	■						■		■						■	
27	Disaster Council				■										■			■	
28	Downtown Revitalization and Economic Recovery Financing District Board of Directors				■														
29	Elections Commission	■							■			■							
30	Elections Task Force — **Redistricting Task Force**	■													■				
31	Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District Public Financing Authority No. 1				■													■	
32	Entertainment Commission			■						■		■					■		■

Note: Hiring/firing departments heads removed from Commissions; handed authority to the Mayor. "Consultative responsibilities" changed to "Optional."

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	Toral:	21	14	21	25	4	1	7	11	24	1	20	1	4	21	12	3	20	4
33	Ethics Commission	Forthcoming ?																	
34	Family Violence Council				■													■	
35	Film Commission				■					■					■				
36	Fine Arts Museums Board of Trustees	■							■			■							
37	Fire Commission	■	■					■		■									
38	Free City College Oversight Committee				■											■			
39	Health Commission	■	■					■		■		■							
40	Health Service Board	■							■									■	
41	Historic Preservation Commission	■										■						■	
42	Homelessness Oversight Commission			■						■				■	■			■	
43	Human Rights Commission			■		■				■				■	■				
44	Human Services Commission		■	■						■		■							■
45	Immigrant Rights Commission				■										■			■	
46	Inclusionary Housing Technical Advisory Committee				■										■				
47	In-Home Supportive Services Public Authority								■										
48	Interdepartmental Staff Committee on Traffic and Transportation (ISCOTT)			■															
49	Joint Zoo Committee	NOT CODIFIED; KEPT AS A MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE ZOO AND THE CITY																	
50	Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council				■										■				
51	Juvenile Probation Commission	■	■							■		■							
52	Law Library Board of Trustees	REMOVE FROM CHARTER BUT KEEP BODY																	
53	LGBTQI+ Advisory Committee				■										■				
54	Library Commission	■	■					■		■									
55	Park, Recreation, & Open Space Advisory Cmt. (PROSAC)			■												■			
56	Planning Commission	■	■							■		■							
57	Police Commission	■	■					■				■							
58	Port Commission	■	■					■		■									
59	Public Utilities Citizen's Advisory Committee															■			
60	Public Utilities Commission	■	■							■		■							
61	Public Utilities Rate Fairness Board			■															
62	Real Estate Fraud Prosecution Trust Fund Committee				■														
63	Recreation and Park Commission	■	■					■		■								■	
64	Refuse Rate Board			■															
65	Rent Stabilization and Arbitration Board (Rent Board)					■			■										
66	Retiree Health Care Trust Fund Board																		
67	Retirement Board	■							■										
68	SFMTA Board of Directors and Parking Authority Commission	■	■							■		■							
69	SFMTA Citizens' Advisory Council			■												■		■	
70	Sheriff's Department Oversight Board			■		■			■			■		■`	■`			■`	

Note: Hiring/firing departments heads removed from Commissions; handed authority to the Mayor. "Consultative responsibilities" changed to "Optional."

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	Toral:	**21**	**14**	**21**	**25**	**4**	**1**	**7**	**11**	**24**	**1**	**20**	**1**	**4**	**21**	**12**	**3**	**20**	**4**
71	Small Business Commission			■			■			■						■	■		■
72	SOMA Community Stabilization Fund Community Advisory Committee				■											■			
73	South of Market Community Planning Advisory Committee				■											■			
74	Southeast Community Facility Commission				■				■										
75	State Legislation Committee														■				
76	Sugary Drinks Distributor Tax Advisory Committee				■														
77	Sunshine Ordinance Task Force				■													■	
78	Sweatfree Procurement Advisory Group				■											■			
79	Treasure Island Development Authority Board of Directors				■			■		■									
80	Veterans' Affairs Commission				■											■		■	
81	War Memorial Board of Trustees	■	■							■		■							
82	Workforce Investment Board											■			■				
83	Youth Commission			■											■				

Body's Functions Combined With Another Body and Then Body Eliminated

1	Access Appeals Commission **(Functions referred to Board of Appeals)**			■															
2	Board of Examiners **(Functions referred to Board of Appeals)**																		
3	Sentencing Commission (**Recommended Be Converted to Passive Meeting Body**)																		
4	SFMTA (Revenue) Bond Oversight Committee (**Functions Transferred to SFMTA Staff**)																		
5	Dignity Fund Oversight and Advisory **Committee Functions Combined With Disability and Aging Services Commission Advisory Council**)																		
6	Reentry Council (Transferred t0 Passive Meeting Body or Staff)																		

Green Column: Bodies the Streamlining task Force has deferred making complete decisions about.
Blue Column: Bodies the Streamlining Task Force has combined via eliminating the bodies and transferring their "*functions*" to another body or to City Staff to perform.

Source: Commission Streamlining Task Force: 1) "***Decision Log***" (12/9/25), 2) Meeting Minutes, and 3) Staff Recommendation Memo's and Presentation documents. **As of: 12/9/2025**

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