

Member, Board of Supervisors
District 9



City and County of San Francisco

JACKIE FIELDER

December 18, 2025

Commission Streamlining Task Force
Ed Harrington, Chair, Public Sector Labor Representative, BOS Designee
Andrea Bruss, Vice Chair, City Attorney's Office
Sophie Hayward, Member, City Administrator's Office
Natasha Mihal, Member, Controller's Office
Jean Fraser, Member, CEO of Presidio Trust/Mayor's Designee

Re: San Francisco Youth Commission Recommendations

Dear Commission Streamlining Task Force Members:

I have been following the process and recommendations that your task force has put forth for the San Francisco Youth Commission and strongly urge you to reconsider your proposal to remove this body from the San Francisco Charter.

The Youth Commission is about to celebrate its thirtieth year, and for three decades has ensured that young people have a voice and a concrete avenue for advocacy on issues that affect San Francisco's youth and families, on topics such as education, transit, public health, climate change, housing, and more. Their work has directly impacted policy decisions and initiated fundamental legislation that has improved the lives of youth and families, including Free Muni for youth 18 and under, one of the only programs of its kind in the nation. The Youth Commission itself is a pioneering model and one of the oldest in the country, inspiring the creation of other such bodies in jurisdictions throughout California and the U.S.

The creation of this Commission was overwhelmingly adopted by San Francisco voters in 1995, with over 60% approval. The first class was sworn in 1996. The voters' intent, in keeping with our City's sacred democratic process, supported a Charter Amendment that would mandate a permanent, city-funded body responsible for advising the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor on policies and laws relevant to young people. Members are appointed by these elected leaders to best represent the youth of San Francisco. Commissioners learn about government, study proposed legislation, identify issues that need attention, advocate for legislation to address such concerns, and advise City government on policy and budget decisions.

Fundamentally, the Youth Commission, as it is currently structured, is working as designed. It is a well-functioning official body that has shown consistency and follow-through on their mandate, meeting regularly and with quorum, producing resolutions and policy positions that reflect the voices of young people, and communicating their determinations regularly with Supervisor offices, the Mayor

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and City departmental staff. Youth Commissioners are motivated to serve and committed to its mission, and in countless cases the experiences have led to budding careers in public service. Former members have gone on to serve in government, run for elected office, and assume leadership roles at their high schools, Universities, and in their subsequent careers. Most importantly, the vast majority have remained civically engaged in their community.

From published testimony in support of the Youth Commission, dozens of former commissioners and community partners affirmed the impact the Youth Commission has had on their lives, as well as on the communities they have represented. Ariana Arana, a former District 9 Commissioner appointed by my predecessor, shared that “serving on the Youth Commission was one of the most transformative experiences of my life. It shaped the leader, advocate, and young professional I am today. As a member of the Civic Engagement Committee, I spent two years helping lead the Vote16 campaign. Even though the measure didn’t pass, I walked away with a deep understanding of the power of youth advocacy, the importance of building strong civic habits early, and the critical role young people play in strengthening our democracy.”

The recent U.S. census counted that young people 21 and under, represent between 20-25% of the population of San Francisco. This is a sizable constituency that should always have official vocal representation in the structures of City government. The recommendation to move the Youth Commission from the City Charter to the Administrative Code puts its mission and integrity at risk and would allow future electeds to determine its fate upon political whim. This could mean subjecting the Youth Commission to potential dissolution, regardless of voter intent.

Given the precedent we have set for youth voice and civic engagement in our City, I sincerely urge you to reconsider this recommendation, and uphold the will of the voters of San Francisco.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jackie Fielder", written in a cursive style.

Supervisor Jackie Fielder

Cc:

Angela Calvillo, Clerk, Board of Supervisors

Alondra Esquivel Garcia, Director, SF Youth Commission

Joshua Rudy Ochoa, Community Partnership Specialist, SF Youth Commission

Joy Zhan, Youth Development Specialist, SF Youth Commission