

City and County of San Francisco

Human Rights Commission

Resolution Number: 26-01

WHEREAS, The San Francisco Bay Area has been a catalyst for progressive political movements including the Beatnik era of the 1940's which evolved into the counter-culture movement of the Haight-Ashbury in the 60's; the 1966 establishment of the Black Panther Party in Oakland, and the earliest officially documented LGBTQ uprising in the country, the Compton's Cafeteria Riot, which took place in San Francisco's Tenderloin that same year; the SF State student strike of 68-69 which established the first Ethnic Studies program in the country, and more; and

WHEREAS, The 1960s in San Francisco was a time of heightened racial tension that catalyzed a local civil rights movement, including demonstrations like the Mel's Drive-In Sit-ins, the Sheraton-Palace Hotel & Auto Row Protests, and the March on Mason Street, which protested the discrimination against African Americans in employment and housing; and

WHEREAS, The San Francisco Human Rights Commission was established in 1964 by Mayor John Shelley in order to develop "equitable and durable human rights policies for San Francisco"¹ that might protect the "full rights and equal opportunities for all San Franciscans;"² and

WHEREAS, There have been various reports since the establishment of the Human Rights Commission, including the "Report of the Interim Committee on Human Relations" (1964), "The Unfinished Agenda: The Economic Status of African Americans in San Francisco 1964-1990" (1993), and the Report of the Mayor's Task Force on African-American Out-Migration" (2009) which unanimously concluded that workforce and housing discrimination against African Americans undermined progress and community relations; and

WHEREAS, In 1970, Huey P. Newton, co-founder of the Black Panther Party, published a letter in the Black Panther's newspaper calling for solidarity between the Civil Rights movement for racial justice and the Women's Liberation Movement and the Gay Liberation movement, recognizing that liberation is both intersectional and collective; and

WHEREAS, The mandated obligations and duties of the Human Rights Commission have expanded over the last six decades pursuant to various City ordinances to address the causes of and problems resulting from prejudice, intolerance, bigotry and discrimination against all communities as the anti-discrimination enforcement agency for the City and County of San Francisco; and

WHEREAS, On Thursday, February 26, 2026, the Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer of the Human Rights Commission (Department) presented a budget to the Human Rights Commission commissioners proposing \$2.2M in budget cuts to the Department's programs; and

¹ Human Relations, Interim Committee on. "Report by the Interim Committee on Human Relations 1964." sf.gov, October 8, 1964. https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2022-11/Report_by_the_Interim_Committee_on_Human_Relations_October_8_1964.pdf.

² ibid.

WHEREAS, In the last 17 months, the Human Rights Commission’s budget has been reduced and the staff has been reduced by 9 people while the work duties, programmatic needs, and civil rights enforcement expectations of the department have not only been sustained but have grown during the same time frame and are continuing to be expanded at a time when the rights of minority groups including Black and indigenous people of color, immigrants, women, and the LGBTQI+ community are being targeted by rightwing extremists; and

WHEREAS, The Dream Keeper Initiative was created to dismantle systemic inequities in city service access and support for African American communities in the housing, health, education, workforce training, business ownership, public safety, and to ensure that San Francisco’s diverse Black communities are experiencing joy, feelings of safety, and are holistically healthy and thriving and that has yet to be achieved; and

WHEREAS, The Dream Keeper Initiative has been reduced from \$60 million per year across citywide departments to \$31.9 million across citywide departments in the Mayor’s budget, with \$19 million being in the HRC’s budget; and

WHEREAS, In the last 24 months, the Human Rights Commission, the Office of Transgender Initiatives (OTI), and the Department on the Status of Women (DOSW), were consolidated under the newly created “Agency for Human Rights” with only budgetary support for staff salaries for OTI and DOSW; and

WHEREAS, The Office of Transgender Initiatives is an international beacon of support and technical assistance to advocates, policy leaders, and LGBTQI+ community stakeholders as the only office of its kind embedded in City government; and

WHEREAS, The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex Advisory Committee was established in 1975 by Mayor Dianne Feinstein following the assassination of Supervisor Harvey Milk, and is mandated to address the causes of, and problems resulting from, prejudice, intolerance, bigotry, and discrimination affecting the LGBTQI+ community; and

WHEREAS, The LGBTQI+ Advisory Committee’s work has resulted in legislation, including protections for domestic partnerships; safeguards for employment and access to medical care for people living with HIV/AIDS, increased LGBTQI+ representation in education, amending Section 12A of the City’s Administrative Code adding gender identity as a protected characteristic, and the establishing of Chapter 12N: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning Youth Services Sensitivity Training; and

WHEREAS, The LGBTQI+ Advisory Committee has produced numerous reports that have informed City operations, including “Crisis in the Community: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, & Questioning Homeless Youth” (2004); “Beyond Marriage: Unrecognized Family Partnerships” (2009); and “Addressing the Needs of LGBT Older Adults in San Francisco: Recommendations for the Future” (2013); and

WHEREAS, The Human Rights Commission enforces various anti-discrimination laws including the Sanctuary City ordinance, the Fair Chance ordinance, and contract compliance of City Contractors; and

WHEREAS, Only three months into 2026, over 700 anti-transgender bills have already been introduced across the United States³ targeting transgender people’s access to education, healthcare, and public life; this is a nearly exponential increase from the previous year when 600+ bills were introduced in all of 2025⁴; and

WHEREAS, The Department on the Status of Women exists to reduce domestic violence and sexual assault, address sexual harassment in city government, combat human trafficking, and advance pay equity, reproductive justice, and gender-inclusive services in San Francisco; and

WHEREAS, Beyond operating as the anti-discrimination enforcement agency for the City and County of San Francisco, the Human Rights Commission is the established point agency for managing community relations across every marginalized ethnic and identity group; and

WHEREAS, On Thursday, February 12, 2026 over 50 community members representing constituencies that are supported and protected by the work of the Human Rights Commission attended the Commission meeting to uplift their concerns about public safety, ongoing divestment from the critical social services of community-based organizations, and the need for equitable investments across San Francisco’s neighborhoods in order to feel safe in their communities; and

WHEREAS, Community members highlighted the threat that additional budget reductions would cause for the physical, emotional, and economic safety of marginalized communities, specifically young people of color, LGBTQI+ people, African Americans, people seeking sanctuary, and other vulnerable communities in San Francisco; and

WHEREAS, Community members advocated for the urgent need of community stabilization funding for small businesses and organizations that interface with vulnerable populations as a measure of public safety; and

WHEREAS, The Executive Director and Chief Finance Officer shared with Commissioners that the Mayor’s budget office requested an additional \$5.5 million in cuts to vital services provided by the Human Rights Commission; and

WHEREAS, On Thursday, February 12, 2026, the Human Rights Commission presented their proposed budget reductions of \$2.2 million in an effort to both support the Mayor’s efforts to reduce the budget deficit and to respect the service and programmatic needs of the community; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Daniel Lurie has highlighted the unique contributions to San Francisco of the constituencies that the Human Rights Commission was established to include and protect in San Francisco; and

³ Tracker, Trans Legislation. “2026 Anti-Trans Bills Tracker.” Translegislation.com, 2026.

<https://translegislation.com/>

⁴ ACLU. “Mapping Attacks on LGBTQ Rights in U.S. State Legislatures in 2025.” American Civil Liberties Union, December 29, 2025. <https://www.aclu.org/legislative-attacks-on-lgbtq-rights-2025>.

WHEREAS, Mayor Daniel Lurie has actively committed to protecting funding for services for the LGBTQI+ community, marginalized youth, immigrants, people of color whose rights are threatened daily by the rhetoric and actions at the federal level and the bigotry it emboldens locally; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Daniel Lurie's stated priorities of all San Franciscans experiencing neighborhood safety and having a sense of belonging cannot be achieved if the people who have heretofore not been provided equitable access to City resources experience further cuts to their baseline needs; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Human Rights Commission hereby expresses its support for the Department's March 2, 2026, budget submission, as is; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Human Rights Commission will continue to advocate for restoration to the Department's budget; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Human Rights Commission urges the Mayor's Budget Office to consider the increase in need as well as the community's requests and prevent any cuts to the Department's budget and work to ensure that working families and marginalized San Franciscans do not experience deeper harm.