

Written Comment for Sep 3, 2026 Homelessness Oversight Commission meeting.

I want to speak directly to the grand jury's findings today, that the commission was not required to respond to which I will address in my comments. The choices being made around our oversight structure carry profound consequences for San Francisco and the unhoused residents who depend on these services.

I fully support making City Hall more efficient. None of us want bureaucratic gridlock, and streamlining processes is a worthy goal. To be clear, I do not believe this commission needs to hold the final decision-making power on approving every individual contract.

However, we must be firm on one fundamental principle: efficiency must never become a justification for sacrificing accountability.

Converting this commission into a purely advisory body and stripping away its audit, budget, and performance review functions is a serious step backward. It weakens the core principles of good governance and directly undermines the public's trust at a time when residents are demanding greater transparency, stronger oversight, and clear results from our homelessness response.

We see this same pattern in Finding 5 regarding the Shelter Monitoring Committee. It is important to remember why the SMC was originally placed under the Department of Public Health: it was designed as an independent, objective check to address critical living conditions—from hot water outages to sanitation and food safety. When the committee was later transferred under HSH, it created an inherent conflict of interest by asking the department to oversee itself. Now, as the SMC sunsets, we risk losing that independent safeguard entirely.

As we work with the Controller's Office on Recommendations 5.1 and 5.2, any replacement mechanism must maintain real independence. For both ethical and operational reasons, it must structurally engage community members and individuals with lived experience from outside the department to conduct unannounced site visits and handle complaint resolutions.

We also see the risks of weakening oversight in the execution of Chapter 21B no-bid contracting. Earlier this year, trusted community providers who have delivered vital legal services to this city for decades were effectively shut out because the department exercised its authority to hand-pick a provider. This created deep division among community partners.

Just because the authority exists to bypass competitive bidding does not mean it is wise to use it. By the time public concern reached this commission, the decision was already finalized, leaving both Commissioners and the public without meaningful input. If HSH intends to maintain good-faith partnerships with the community, transparency cannot be an afterthought—it must happen before contracts are locked in.

When you connect all these dots raising the Board of Supervisors' contract review threshold from \$10 million to \$25 million, extending no-bid contracting through 2029, and stripping this

commission's oversight tools, we are looking at hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars moving through the system with virtually no public scrutiny.

Moving fast is only an asset if you are moving in the right direction. Speed without accountability is not progress; it is a breakdown of public stewardship. Even if we do not all share the same perspective on every finding today, I feel a strict duty to put these concerns on the record. We cannot allow efficiency to erode the accountability its providers, and its taxpayers deserve."

Submitted by Commissioner Guerrero