

***Regular Meeting
of the
Building Inspection Commission***

August 20, 2025

Agenda Item 6

Public Comment

SEMCO
ENGINEERING INC.

August 20, 2025

Building Inspection Commission
City of San Francisco
49 South Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94103

Re: Repeal of Slope Protection Act

Dear Building Inspection Commissioners:

I am submitting this letter to speak to my experiences and opinions regarding the Slope Protection Act. As a matter of introduction, I am a structural engineer and have been practicing here in San Francisco for over 30 years. We have filled out and submitted hundreds of permit applications since the Slope Protection Act came into being.

Although the intentions of the act are sound, the Act is overreaching and applied too liberally. In addition, the enforcement of the Act is coming at great expense to the citizens of San Francisco.

The following outlines some of the reasons why we feel the Act should be repealed

- Since July of last year, most projects now require both a geologist and a soils engineer. We have seen countless geologist reports. Not once has the report altered the recommendations of the soils engineer.
- If the city mapping system has flagged a portion of the lot as 25%, the Act is enforced. This includes lots where a corner of the lot is flagged but work is occurring at the opposite end of the lot.
- The Act is enforced on smaller retaining wall projects where walls are simply being repaired. The financial burden on the homeowner is significant and often leaves conditions in a state of disrepair. A small \$25K retaining wall project can face up to \$10K in soils and geologist fees.

In our opinion, the pre-existing Information Sheet S-05, Geotechnical Report Requirements adequately defines when soils reports are needed. It should be noted that S-05 already calls for soils reports in conditions such as horizontal addition of 50% or more, vertical additions of 500 sf or more, grading of over 50 yd³, and when footings are on or adjacent to slopes steeper than one to three.

Regards,


Shaun Moynahan, S.E.
SEMCO Engineering Inc.