

## **DRAFT – FOR REVIEW BY VAC AT 3/10/2026 COMMISSION MEETING**

Subject: Request to Reject Proposed Renaming of the Veterans Affairs Commission

Dear Supervisor [Last Name],

On behalf of the VAC, we respectfully request your support in rejecting the proposal from the City's Commission Streamlining Task Force to rename the "Veterans Affairs Commission" as the "Veterans' Affairs Council."

There is a structural gap that must be acknowledged.

The Veterans Affairs Commission carries responsibilities to advise the City, communicate with departments, and provide insight to the Mayor and the SOB on issues affecting veterans. However, the Commission does not operate with the same structural footing as charter commissions. Charter commissions have authority and funding protections written into the City Charter. The Veterans Affairs Commission does not.

The Commission was created by ordinance after a vote of the Board of Supervisors in 1994. That vote matters. It represents a legislative decision by the City to create a permanent advisory body for veterans in San Francisco and to elevate veteran issues to a level that receives consistent visibility and accountability within City government.

Renaming the Commission to a council would reverse that legislative decision and weaken the standing that the Board intentionally established three decades ago. A commission carries a recognized role in the City's governance structure. A council is often viewed as informal and easier to deprioritize.

Veteran issues also do not fit neatly into the template used by the Commission Streamlining Task Force to evaluate advisory bodies. Veteran needs are not temporary. Housing stability, healthcare access, benefits navigation, and justice-involved veteran services are long-term responsibilities that continue across generations.

For this reason, the structure created in 1994 remains relevant today. Preserving the Veterans Affairs Commission maintains the formal channel through which veterans' concerns are elevated to City leadership.

San Francisco made a deliberate legislative decision to establish a Veterans Affairs Commission so that veterans would have a permanent voice within City government. When institutions turn away from veterans, cities must remain steadfast in their commitments.

We respectfully ask that the Board uphold the legislation it passed and preserve the Commission that was created to represent those who served.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

San Francisco Veterans Affairs Commission  
City and County of San Francisco