

From: [Somera, Alisa \(BOS\)](#)
To: [BOS Legislation, \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: FW: Testimony on ear File 251245, Charter Amendment - Lifetime Term Limits for Mayor and Members of the Board of Supervisors – Oppose
Date: Monday, February 23, 2026 9:52:51 AM
Attachments: [File No 260142 Testimony to Board of Supes Restore Outdoor Public Warning System.pdf](#)

For FAWCR item

Alisa Somera

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(VIRTUAL APPOINTMENTS) To schedule a “virtual” meeting with me (on Microsoft Teams), please ask and I can answer your questions in real time.

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**From:** pmonette-shaw <pmonette-shaw@earthlink.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 20, 2026 9:26 PM  
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**Subject:** Testimony on ear File 251245, Charter Amendment - Lifetime Term Limits for Mayor and Members of the Board of Supervisors – Oppose

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## Patrick Monette-Shaw

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San Francisco, CA 94109

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February 20, 2026

### Board of Supervisors

The Honorable Raphael Mandelman, President of the Board of Supervisors

The Honorable Connie Chan, Supervisor, District 1

The Honorable Stephen Sherrill, Supervisor, District 2

The Honorable Danny Sauter, Supervisor, District 3

The Honorable Alan Wong, Supervisor, District 4

The Honorable Bilal Mahmood, District 5

The Honorable Matt Dorsey, Supervisor, District 6

The Honorable Myrna Melgar, District 7

The Honorable Jackie Fielder, Supervisor, District 9

The Honorable Shamann Walton, Supervisor, District 10

The Honorable Chyanne Chen, District 11

1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place

San Francisco, CA 94102

Re: **Testimony on File 260142 — Resolution: Emergency**

### Preparedness

### **Restoration of Outdoor Public Warning Sirens System**

Dear President Mandelman and Board of Supervisors,

Regarding File #**260142 Resolution: Emergency Preparedness Restoration of Outdoor Public Warning System**, I urge each District Supervisor to rapidly sign on as a co-sponsor of Supervisor Wong's proposed resolution, and pass this Resolution unanimously. Then, get to work to identify funding to rapidly repair the noon warning sirens and bring them back on-line by the end of calendar year 2026! ***Voters in each District are closely watching your action — or inaction — on this!***

The siren syst *must* be declared an urgent matter for the City, and funding be identified and dedicated rapidly to bring the sirens back on-line, as *Priority Number 1* for the City. They should

not have been offline for seven years already! *It's way past time the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) stop "studying" this problem and move on to taking real action!*

And the Capital Planning Committee must be told to rapidly identify funding sources for the noon sirens in the upcoming Fiscal Year 2026–2027 City budget.

After all, if the siren system were to cost \$7.5 *million*, that represents just 0.047% of the City's current \$15.9 *billion*-dollar City budget. Alternatively, even if restoring all of the City's 119 sirens into service were to cost \$20 million, that again represents just 0.1257% — just over one-tenth of one percent — of the \$15.9 *billion annual* City budget, This is a ridiculously small percentage of spending to help all San Franciscans be more adequately alerted in the event of any number of public disasters. It's the **least** the City should be doing, and can surely afford!

The outdoor warning sirens need to be based on using the City's 800 MHz radio system DEM that operates at 1011 Turk Street as a highly secure, resilient backbone as the most efficient platform on which to host the analog siren system! After all, the *AlertSF* system was to be a redundant backup system to the sirens, the latter of which came first!

DEM has wrongly "*framed*" the outdoor warning system as being a **backup** system, as a redundancy matter. That's completely backwards. The siren system had come **first**, and all of the radio, broadcast TV, and digital alert systems connecting to the Internet and eventually to cell phones came later, as additional tools to **bolster the warning siren system**. The sirens were installed back in 1942 to warn residents of potential air raids during World War II. The City's *AlertSF* system became operational 50 years **later** in 2011 or 2012. So, *AlertSF* is the actual "*additional tool*," and is somewhat redundant to the long history of developing our public alert warning systems.

As Supervisor Wong's Resolution in File # #260142 notes, San Francisco's outdoor public warning system, consisting of approximately 119 sirens located throughout the City, was taken offline in December 2019 due to **potential** cybersecurity concerns, because the sirens were susceptible to being hacked and manipulated, and has remained non-operational for six years. Not an **actual** risk of being hacked or manipulated, but a **potential** for being at susceptible risk of being hacked.

On December 5, 2024, the 7.0 magnitude earthquake off the coast of Humboldt County triggered a tsunami warning for San Francisco, during which the City lacked a functional outdoor warning system to supplement cell phone alerts, requiring first responders to physically drive to Ocean Beach with loudspeakers to warn residents.

San Francisco's December 20, 2025 power outage, which affected approximately 130,000 San Francisco PG&E customers for up to 48 hours, demonstrated the vulnerability of relying solely on cell phone-based emergency alerts, as residents' phones lost battery power and with it, their ability to receive emergency notifications or contact 9–1–1.

The August 2023 Maui wildfires, which killed over 100 people in Lahaina, demonstrated both the limitations of cell phone-based alerts during power outages and the need for outdoor warning systems capable of broadcasting specific evacuation instructions.

Supervisor Wong's proposed Resolution indicates San Francisco's *AlertSF* system, while valuable, has only approximately 195,000 subscribers out of more than 800,000 residents, leaving the majority of the population without opt-in emergency notifications.

San Francisco's Department of Emergency Management (DEM) claimed in December 2024 *AlertSF* only had 195,000 San Francisco residents subscribe to "*AlertSF*, out of 809,000 City residents, just 24.1% of San Franciscans. That leaves 75.9% of San Franciscans vulnerable in the event of any

disaster — and they won't receive any kind of alerts!

But in response to a records request placed on December 5, 2024 DEM provided an Excel file that showed *AlertSF* had just 48,192 subscribers — just 5.96% of San Franciscans. By analyzing the Zip Codes and City names, only 36,152 of the 48,192 live in San Francisco — **reducing *AlertSF* subscribers to just 4.5% of San Franciscans** (36,152 of 809,000).

That *AlertSF* may actually only reach 4.5% of San Franciscans is unacceptable, and suggests that the City's failure to urgently fund and bring the Outdoor Public Warning Siren system back on line is placing hundreds of thousands of San Franciscans' lives at great risk.

Since the sirens went silent, we have seen projected costs escalate from \$3 million to \$7 million, then to at last count perhaps \$20 million. But it's hard to believe the veracity of these figures, because its not clear whether DEM's RFI process that began in April 2024 ever advanced to issuing an actual competitive-bid RFP by 2025 — or if the project hit another snag and stalled for all of 2025.

A City Hall press release on August 24, 2023 reported that then-Mayor Breed had joined then-Board of Supervisors President Aaron Peskin to announce plans to prioritize upgrading the City's Outdoor Public Warning System (OPWS) during an August 2023 Mayor's Disaster Council meeting.

The press release noted:

*“Anyone who lived in San Francisco before December 2019 knows all too well the familiar Tuesday noon sirens test and the assurance that came with this safety message that boomed throughout the City,” said Mayor London Breed. “The recent devastation in Maui was a tragic example of how important emergency notifications to residents, businesses and tourists are, and although we historically have had minimal need to use the sirens in San Francisco, we must be ready when the time comes. This additional tool will bolster our City’s existing comprehensive alert and warning system.”*

*“While I was initially disappointed that this critical investment in our public safety infrastructure was not funded in the City’s Capital Plan, I am delighted that we were able to collaborate and find funds to finally get the Warning System back up and running,” said Board of Supervisors President Aaron Peskin.*

According to that press release, funds to reactivate the sirens had reportedly been identified by Breed and Peskin. So why hasn't the siren system been turned back on yet? **What happened to those funds identified in 2023?**

The Board of Supervisors **must** support the restoration of the outdoor public warning system as an important component of a comprehensive emergency alert strategy for protecting the lives and safety of San Franciscans, not just those who live in tsunami evacuation zones and coastal areas, since emergencies are typically citywide, not just confined to specific San Francisco neighborhoods.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

**Patrick Monette-Shaw**  
*Columnist/Reporter*

*Westside Observer* Newspaper

cc: The Honorable Daniel Lurie, Mayor of San Francisco  
Angela Calvillo, Clerk of the Board  
Alisa Somera, Legislative Deputy Director, Clerk of the Board's Office

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**Bring back the ‘noon sirens’!**

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Re: **Testimony on File 260142 — Resolution: Emergency Preparedness Restoration of Outdoor Public Warning Sirens System**

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February 20, 2026

**File 260142 — Resolution: Emergency Preparedness Restoration of Outdoor Public Warning Sirens System**

Page 3

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