

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC DEFENDER

JEFF ADACHI – PUBLIC DEFENDER
MATT GONZALEZ – CHIEF ATTORNEY



December 9, 2016

San Francisco Board of Supervisors

Board.of.Supervisors@sfgov.org

Via Email

Re: In support of the appointment of John Hamasaki to the Police Commission

Dear San Francisco Board of Supervisors:

I am writing in support of John Hamasaki's application to serve on the San Francisco Police Commission. I know John as an attorney and an individual who is dedicated to serving the diverse communities of San Francisco in the criminal justice system. John has dedicated his career to defending civil rights and civil liberties, giving voice to those who need it most. Through this work, John has maintained close working relationships with the courts, prosecutors, public defenders and law enforcement, and has seen first-hand the challenges facing the Commission. I believe that this background, training, and experience makes him uniquely qualified to serve on the Commission.

I have served as elected Public Defender of the City and County of San Francisco since March 2002 and worked as a deputy public defender in San Francisco for 15 years. From 1998-2001, I served as the Chief Attorney of the office. I have been a critic of police misconduct and lack of accountability, and an enthusiastic supporter of police reform measures such as crisis intervention training and body cameras.

Our office represents more than 23,000 people each year who are charged with misdemeanor and felony offenses. Fair and honest policing is crucial to their right to impartial justice.

Like many people, I believe that the San Francisco Police Department can be a national model in policing and police reform. But I am also realistic that it is going to take hard work and difficult choices to get us there. I trust John to sit down with community members, law enforcement and service organizations to help heal the divide and restore trust and faith in our justice system.

John has an excellent reputation as a leader in the legal community, sitting on the boards of the Asian American Bar Association, the Barristers Club of the Bar Association of San Francisco, and the California Attorneys for Criminal Justice. He is also a member of the Legislative Committee of CACJ helping fight against mass incarceration and for a fairer criminal justice system. He has put on programs on race, policing and implicit bias in the legal system, topics that will inform and guide his work as a commissioner. John has focused much of his work in the legal associations advocating for diversity and inclusivity within the law.

Adult Division - HOJ
555 Seventh Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
P: 415.553.1671
F: 415.553.9810
www.sfpublicdefender.org

Juvenile Division - YGC
375 Woodside Avenue, Rm. 118
San Francisco, CA 94127
P: 415.753.7601
F: 415.566.3030

Juvenile Division - JJC
258A Laguna Honda Blvd.
San Francisco, CA 94116
P: 415.753.8174
F: 415.753.8175

Clean Slate
P: 415.553.9337
www.sfpublicdefender.org/services

Community Justice Center
P: 415.202.2832
F: 415.563.8506

Bayview Magic
P: 415.558.2428
www.bayviewmagic.org

MoMagic
P: 415.567.0400
www.momagic.org

For five years, John helped lead the College Track Mock Trial Program, a program based in the Bayview neighborhood helping coach underserved primarily minority students learn rules of evidence, courtroom presentation and lawyering. He also continues to mentor law students to help prepare them to become attorneys and work within the justice system to make positive change.

John has dedicated his life to serving underrepresented communities in the San Francisco and the throughout the Bay Area. He has built an excellent reputation for his hard work, dedication, and compassion for everyone involved in the justice system from his clients, to victims, to law enforcement, prosecutors, court staff and the judiciary.

I believe that the choice of a new commissioner can have real life and death consequences. If we don't begin to follow the lead of the Department of Justice and implement real reform within the SFPD, we are putting our City and our officers at risk. I have faith in John to make the right decisions to provide the police with the right tools and training in order to save lives and stay safe.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Adachi', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jeff Adachi
San Francisco Public Defender

CC: Alisa.Somera@sfgov.org, Derek.Evans@sfgov.org, Dyanna.Quizon@sfgov.org, Nickolas.Pagoulatos@sfgov.org, Yoyo.Chan@sfgov.org, Brittini.Chicuata@sfgov.org, Frances.Hsieh@sfgov.org, Jeremy.Pollock@sfgov.org, Beth.Rubenstein@sfgov.org, AvalosStaff@sfgov.org, Samantha.Roxas@sfgov.org, Conor.Johnston@sfgov.org, Rosie.Dilger@sfgov.org, Hillary.Ronen@sfgov.org, sheila.chung.hagen@sfgov.org, Carolyn.Goossen@sfgov.org, Sunny.Angulo@sfgov.org, Connie.Chan@sfgov.org, Lee.Hepner@sfgov.org, Kanishka.Karunaratne@sfgov.org, Margaux.Kelly@sfgov.org, Jess.Montejano@sfgov.org, April.Veneracion@sfgov.org, Barbara.Lopez@sfgov.org, Ivy.Lee@sfgov.org, Adam.Taylor@sfgov.org, Jeff.Cretan@sfgov.org, Andres.Power@sfgov.org, Erica.Maybaum@sfgov.org, Jarlene.Choy@sfgov.org, Jen.Low@sfgov.org