



July 7, 2015

Board of Supervisors
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

Re: Language Assistance and Services at Board of Supervisors Meetings

Dear Supervisors,

On behalf of the Language Access Network, I am writing in support of the proposed amendment to the San Francisco Administrative Code, which would provide interpretation services and translation of certain documents at the Board of Supervisors meetings.

The Language Access Network was founded in 2013 and is currently comprised of the following community-based organizations: African Advocacy Network, Arab Resource and Organizing Center, Central American Resource Center, Chinese for Affirmative Action, Filipino Community Center, Mujeres Unidas y Activas, and People Organizing to Demand Environmental & Economic Rights. All of the network partners have long-time community ties, working in and on behalf of the limited English proficient (LEP) immigrant communities in San Francisco. All organizations provide community outreach and education, provide direct services, and conduct advocacy on behalf of the underserved, low-income, LEP neighborhoods of San Francisco.

We support this effort to increase language assistance at the Board of Supervisors as a critical tool to improve civic engagement at City Hall. For many of our constituents, language barriers are the biggest challenge to social and civic engagement on issues that directly impact them. We also believe this ordinance will alleviate a significant burden that community-based organizations have traditionally experienced: expending time and resources to provide interpretation or translation of critical issues being debated at the full board meetings.

We urge the Board of Supervisors to pass and implement this pilot program to ensure that our multiracial, multilingual democracy will have the full participation of all communities.

Sincerely,

Grace Lee
Policy Director, Chinese for Affirmative Action
On Behalf of the Language Access Network of San Francisco