



February 27, 2026

Government Audit and Oversight Committee  
San Francisco Board of Supervisors  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

**Re: FILE NO. 251252 Notaries ordinance [Police Code - Non-Legal Immigration Services] - SUPPORT**

Dear Members of the Government Audit and Oversight Committee,

On behalf of Chinese for Affirmative Action, I am writing to express our support for FILE NO. 251252 Notaries ordinance [Police Code -Non-Legal Immigration Services]. Chinese for Affirmative Action (CAA) was founded in 1969 to protect the civil and political rights of Chinese Americans and to advance multiracial democracy in the United States. Today, CAA is a progressive voice in and on behalf of the broader Asian American and Pacific Islander community, providing service to residents directly in San Francisco's Chinatown. We champion fighting for immigrant rights, language diversity, economic justice to education and digital equity.

During these aggressive and unlawful federal attacks on our immigrant communities, the availability of accurate and reliable in-language immigration legal information is more crucial than ever. Immigrants eager to secure legal counsel to protect against threats from federal immigration authorities may easily fall victim to fraudulent practices, such as those by unscrupulous notaries. This legislation establishes an important mechanism to support immigrant communities in San Francisco against notary fraud and will provide further safeguards against notaries who charge clients for fraudulent legal counsel. We strongly urge you to support this ordinance.

California State law requires proper signage in English and appropriate languages that indicates they are not certified to provide legal advice, yet this is rarely enforced. This proposed ordinance will inform immigrants of local legal services, and their country consulate contacts, both avenues to receiving proper support and counsel for their immigration cases, listings that are already available and will be provided by the San Francisco Office of Civic Engagement and Immigrant Affairs (OCEIA). This information is vital to immigrants and will direct them to accessible legal services for their cases.

Finally, the role of the Human Rights Commission in this legislation is a welcome resource, for both enforcement of these local regulations, but also in supporting immigrants who wish to submit complaints to the State regulatory agency, should they have been victims of fraudulent legal advice provided by notaries.

We know that notary fraud is a rampant problem statewide and in San Francisco in particular. In San Francisco, there have been many reports of such activity, including the very high-profile lawsuit filed by the City Attorney against notary Leonard Lacayo resulting in the courts requiring him to pay \$600,000 due to his predatory behavior against hundreds of immigrants. This unlawful conduct has dangerous consequences for immigrant families.

Please approve this important piece of legislation that will provide additional protections and support for immigrants in San Francisco.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anisha Hingorani', written in a cursive style.

Anisha Hingorani  
Policy Manager  
Chinese for Affirmative Action

Cc:

Supervisor Jackie Fielder  
Supervisor Stephen Sherrill  
Supervisor Danny Sauter  
Clerk Monique Crayton, San Francisco Board of Supervisors



March 1, 2026

Government Audit and Oversight Committee  
San Francisco Board of Supervisors

Re: FILE NO. 251252 Notaries ordinance [Police Code - Non-Legal Immigration Services]

Dear Government Audit and Oversight Committee Members,

We are writing to express our support for FILE NO. 251252 Notaries ordinance [Police Code - Non-Legal Immigration Services]. Many immigrants are eager to secure legal counsel to protect against threats from federal immigration authorities and may easily fall victim to fraudulent practices, such as those by unscrupulous notaries. Our own organization has witnessed such cases where immigrants are charged excessive fees for services or where notaries misrepresent their services as legal services.

This legislation establishes an important mechanism to support immigrant communities in San Francisco against notary fraud and will provide further safeguards against notaries who charge clients for fraudulent legal counsel. We strongly urge you to support this ordinance.

While most licensed notaries provide legitimate services to the public, unfortunately there are some who engage in fraud and take advantage of immigrants. This is especially prevalent for immigrants from Latin America, where what are known as “Notarios” licensed in Mexico and elsewhere are government appointed lawyers who can provide legal counsel. Here in the U.S. and specifically in California, notaries alone are not licensed attorneys, leaving immigrants confused and susceptible to predatory business practices. This has put countless immigrant community members' legal cases in jeopardy, unaware that their notary is not a properly trained or licensed attorney.

While California State law requires proper signage in English and appropriate languages that indicates they are not certified to provide legal advice, this is rarely enforced. This proposed ordinance will inform immigrants of local legal services, and their country consulate contacts, both avenues to receiving proper support and counsel for their immigration cases, listings that are already available and will be provided by the San Francisco Office of Civic Engagement and Immigrant Affairs (OCEIA). This information is vital to immigrants and will direct them to accessible legal services for their cases.

Finally, the role of the Human Rights Commission in this legislation is a welcome resource, for both enforcement of these local regulations, but also in supporting immigrants who wish to submit complaints to the State regulatory agency, should they have been victims of fraudulent legal advice provided by notaries.

We know that notary fraud is a rampant problem State-wide and in San Francisco in particular. In San Francisco there have been many reports of such activity, including the very high-profile lawsuit filed by the City Attorney against notary Leonard Lacayo resulting in the courts requiring him to pay \$600K due to his predatory behavior against hundreds of immigrants. This unlawful conduct has dangerous consequences for immigrant families.

Please approve this important piece of legislation that will provide additional protections and support for immigrants in San Francisco.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Laura Valdez', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Laura Valdez  
Executive Director

Cc: Clerk Monique Crayton, San Francisco Board of Supervisors



Date: March 4, 2026

Government Audit and Oversight Committee  
San Francisco Board of Supervisors

Re: FILE NO. 251252 Notaries ordinance [Police Code - Non-Legal Immigration Services]

Dear Government Audit and Oversight Committee Members,

We are writing to express our support for FILE NO. 251252 Notaries ordinance [Police Code - Non-Legal Immigration Services]. Many immigrants are eager to secure legal counsel to protect against threats from federal immigration authorities and may easily fall victim to fraudulent practices, such as those by unscrupulous notaries.

Our own organization has witnessed such cases, for example: CARECEN SF met a 20-year-old young woman from Central America who is in the United States with no family. The woman had hired a man to file an application for employment authorization based on her pending asylum case. She sent the man \$650 over Zelle, supposedly to cover the cost of the filing fee. He then texted her a receipt notice for the application. This man created an online account with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) and in the young woman's name, purportedly to be able to file the application, and then refused to provide her with the login information. He told the young woman that her employment authorization card would arrive at his home and that if she did not pay him an additional \$200, that he would not send her the card. When she asked the man for updates as many months had passed with no resolution, he became increasingly angry and abusive in his responses, insulting her and threatening to call immigration if she did not leave him alone. The young woman came to CARECEN SF to ask for help. When a CARECEN SF lawyer checked the application receipt number with the USCIS online case status page, the receipt number was not recognized as valid. The lawyer helped the young woman call the USCIS customer service number, and a USCIS representative confirmed that the application did not exist. When the CARECEN SF lawyer and the young woman called the *notario* over the phone to ask about this situation, he was angry and said that he was "helping the community" and doing it for free or very low cost, that he had helped hundreds of people already.

In another recent example, a woman from South America, who is in removal proceedings before the San Francisco immigration court, received a call from a man who identified himself as an immigration attorney and offered to represent her in an application for citizenship. He told her that he would do the work for free but that she had to pay for the forms. He filled out fake forms for her and appeared with her over zoom in fake immigration interviews where she had to answer a series of questions. After she had paid him \$7,000 for multiple forms and interviews, she became suspicious and consulted with a licensed immigration attorney. That is when she learned that she had been scammed and had lost all of her savings in the process. Worse yet, this scam caused her to miss the one year filing deadline for her asylum claim.

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Please approve this important piece of legislation that will provide additional protections and support for immigrants in San Francisco.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Laura Victoria Sanchez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**Laura Victoria Sanchez, Esq.**

CARECEN SF

Legal Director

[laura@carecensf.org](mailto:laura@carecensf.org)

Cc: Clerk Monique Crayton, San Francisco Board of Supervisors