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Subject: Restore remote public comment at committee meetings!
Date: Monday, November 4, 2024 4:52:55 PM

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Dear Rules Committee Members,

Thank you for all you do to support a more just and livable city for all. I am reaching out today to ask for your support again in making our democratic process accessible to everyone. Thank you to Supervisor Peskin for introducing a [motion](#) on 10/23 to restore remote public comment at Board of Supervisors committee meetings.

I am writing to urge all members of the Rules Committee to support this motion. I also urge the Committee to schedule this item for the next Rules Committee meeting when it can be on the agenda, which is November 18, 2024. Remote public comment is widely supported by a diverse group of people and organizations, evidenced by the 80+ organizations that signed the [campaign letter](#) sent out to the Board of Supervisors last month.

Please include your own reasoning here, and why your communities would benefit from remote public comment. Below are some talking points:

- Reasonable accommodation (allowing remote comment on an individual basis) is a cumbersome and unworkable solution.
- Giving real-time comments (rather than through a letter or email) on issues before a committee is often the last opportunity before a vote is taken.
- Restoring remote public comment only in committee meetings would be less of a lightning rod for hate speech and would allow the Board to manage comments that are not germane to the specific agenda item.
- Residents from our southeast neighborhoods where many BIPOC people live must travel great distances to get to City Hall.
- Health concerns like COVID and virus transmission make it unsafe for many people including many who are immune compromised or suppressed to come to City Hall, where many people are not masked and not careful when sneezing, coughing, etc.

For wheelchair users, the lift at the Polk Street entrance to City Hall is often broken. Not to mention, BART elevators that are chronically broken throughout the Bay Area, making it difficult or impossible for people with mobility aids to reliably make it to City Hall on time, if at all.

- Women who have been abused cannot expose themselves to their abusers knowing their whereabouts.
- Domestic workers often do not have the necessary benefits to be able to take time off and appear in person to give public comment.
- Parents would have to bring their young children to the meetings. Parents of older children may have conflicts with school drop-off and pick-up trying to attend in-person meetings.
- People who have caregiving responsibilities do not always have the flexibility and may not be legally able to leave the person they take care of, or bring them to the meeting.

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Thank you for your attention.

Kind regards,
Nastasia Holm