

From: [Laksh Bhasin](#)
To: [Board of Supervisors, \(BOS\)](#); [Board of Supervisors, \(BOS\)](#); [Chan, Connie \(BOS\)](#); [Stefani, Catherine \(BOS\)](#); [Peskin, Aaron \(BOS\)](#); [Mar, Gordon \(BOS\)](#); [Preston, Dean \(BOS\)](#); [Melgar, Myrna \(BOS\)](#); [Mandelman, Rafael \(BOS\)](#); [Ronen, Hillary](#); [Walton, Shamann \(BOS\)](#); [Safai, Ahsha \(BOS\)](#); [ChanStaff \(BOS\)](#); [StefaniStaff, \(BOS\)](#); [PeskinStaff \(BOS\)](#); [Marstaff \(BOS\)](#); [PrestonStaff \(BOS\)](#); [MelgarStaff \(BOS\)](#); [MandelmanStaff, \(BOS\)](#); [RonenStaff \(BOS\)](#); [Waltonstaff \(BOS\)](#); [SafaiStaff \(BOS\)](#)
Cc: [Berniecrats SF](#); [Breed, Mayor London \(MYR\)](#)
Subject: SF Berniecrats / Mayoral HSH Commission (Safai) — Oppose Unless Amended
Date: Thursday, May 5, 2022 8:13:00 AM
Attachments: [Mayoral HSH Commission SF Berniecrats Position Letter 2022-05-05.pdf](#)

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Dear Board of Supervisors,

My name is Laksh and I coordinate the San Francisco Berniecrats Housing Committee. I have attached a letter from the SF Berniecrats expressing our opposition to the proposed majority-Mayoral Commission (Safai) over HSH, unless amended to no longer be majority-Mayoral, through (for instance) the inclusion of Board of Supervisors appointees and tenants chosen by tenants themselves.

We urge you to not place any such majority-Mayoral Charter Commission on the ballot unless amended to be more democratic as described in our letter. We are happy to meet and discuss this with you further, but primarily encourage you to **engage longtime supportive housing activists and people with lived experience of homelessness** on developing a truly-democratic Charter Commission.

Thank you,
Laksh Bhasin

CC: Mayor London Breed



May 5, 2022

Re: Mayoral HSH Commission (Safai) — Oppose Unless Amended

Dear Board of Supervisors,

The San Francisco Berniecrats believe that everyone deserves an affordable and well-maintained home. As highlighted in a recent SF Chronicle investigation, our city is failing its most vulnerable tenants in permanent supportive housing, who are forced to suffer in substandard living conditions — in buildings where elevators regularly break, vermin run rampant, and ceilings literally fall apart. There is a clear need for more funding to care for residents in dilapidated SRO hotels, and a need for more oversight over the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH).

Despite the need for a Charter commission over HSH, we oppose any such commission if it has a majority of its members appointed by the Mayor. Instead, we urge you to amend Supervisor Safai's proposed Charter amendment so that power is shared co-equally among Board of Supervisors appointees, tenants chosen by permanent supportive housing tenants themselves, and – if necessary – the Mayor.

A majority Mayoral-appointed commission would not offer real oversight, and would be indistinguishable from the current oversight structure over HSH, which reports directly to the Mayor. As highlighted by the Chronicle's investigation, the Mayor's office has repeatedly opposed attempts at oversight and accountability over HSH.

Furthermore, Supervisor Safai's proposal did not include community input from supportive housing activists or people with lived experience of homelessness. We believe decisions about SRO tenants must only be made with their express approval.

In general, our City's strong mayor system exacerbates corruption in government and is un-democratic, concentrating power in the hands of one official. As mentioned by one of the authors of San Jose's Charter, "Big California cities that have a strong mayor form of government such as Los Angeles, San Francisco and Oakland have suffered from institutional corruption for as long as I can remember. **It hurts cities because it favors those in power and their close allies and neglects the public interest.**"

Favoring well-connected individuals or contractors is the exact antithesis of what the Chronicle's investigation into HSH and supportive housing sought to accomplish.

We urge you to not place any such majority-Mayoral Charter Commission on the ballot unless amended to be more democratic as described above: through the co-equal inclusion of tenants chosen by tenants and Board of Supervisors appointees.

Sincerely,

San Francisco Berniecrats

From: [Harlo Pippenger](#)
To: [Board of Supervisors, \(BOS\)](#); [Chan, Connie \(BOS\)](#); [Stefani, Catherine \(BOS\)](#); [Peskin, Aaron \(BOS\)](#); [Mar, Gordon \(BOS\)](#); [Preston, Dean \(BOS\)](#); [Haney, Matt \(BOS\)](#); [Melgar, Myrna \(BOS\)](#); [Mandelman, Rafael \(BOS\)](#); [Ronen, Hillary](#); [Walton, Shamann \(BOS\)](#); [Safai, Ahsha \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Opposing Strong Mayor Commission for HSH Unless Amended
Date: Tuesday, May 3, 2022 5:59:44 PM

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Dear Board of Supervisors,

I am writing to urge you to oppose any Charter Amendment establishing a commission over the SF Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing, if this commission has a majority of its members appointed by the Mayor. According to this [Chronicle article](#), this appears to be what you are considering to improve oversight over HSH.

A majority Mayoral-appointed commission would not offer real oversight. Instead, you may consider amending this proposal such that power is shared co-equally among Board of Supervisors appointees, tenants chosen by permanent supportive housing tenants themselves, and the Mayor.

SF's strong mayor system exacerbates corruption in City government. It concentrates power in the hands of one person, which is definitionally un-democratic, unlike Board of Supervisors appointments that are less subject to the whims of one person. As mentioned in this [Mercury News article](#) by an author of San Jose's charter, "Big California cities that have a strong mayor form of government such as Los Angeles, San Francisco and Oakland have suffered from institutional corruption ... **It hurts cities because it favors those in power and their close allies and neglects the public interest**" (emphasis mine).

Favoring well-connected individuals is the exact antithesis of what the Chronicle's investigation into HSH and supportive housing sought to accomplish.

I urge you to not place any such Charter Amendment on the ballot unless amended to be more democratic as described above: through the co-equal inclusion of tenants and Board appointees.

Thank you,
Harlo Pippenger

From: [Laksh Bhasin](#)
To: [Board of Supervisors, \(BOS\)](#); [Chan, Connie \(BOS\)](#); [Stefani, Catherine \(BOS\)](#); [Peskin, Aaron \(BOS\)](#); [Mar, Gordon \(BOS\)](#); [Preston, Dean \(BOS\)](#); [Haney, Matt \(BOS\)](#); [Melgar, Myrna \(BOS\)](#); [Mandelman, Rafael \(BOS\)](#); [Ronen, Hillary](#); [Walton, Shamann \(BOS\)](#); [Safai, Ahsha \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Opposing Strong Mayor Commission for HSH Unless Amended
Date: Monday, May 2, 2022 6:12:40 PM

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Dear Board of Supervisors,

I am writing to urge you to oppose any Charter Amendment establishing a commission over the SF Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing, if this commission has a majority of its members appointed by the Mayor. According to this [Chronicle article](#), this appears to be what you are considering to improve oversight over HSH.

A majority Mayoral-appointed commission would not offer real oversight. Instead, you may consider amending this proposal such that power is shared co-equally among Board of Supervisors appointees, tenants chosen by permanent supportive housing tenants themselves, and the Mayor.

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Favoring well-connected individuals is the exact antithesis of what the Chronicle's investigation into HSH and supportive housing sought to accomplish.

I urge you to not place any such Charter Amendment on the ballot unless amended to be more democratic as described above: through the co-equal inclusion of tenants and Board appointees.

Thank you,
Laksh Bhasin