



January 20, 2023

Sent via Email: Victor.Young@sfgov.org

TO: Rules Committee
San Francisco Board of Supervisors
Legislative Chamber, Room 250
City Hall, San Francisco, CA 94102

RE: Administrative Code – Veterans Affairs Commission
Sponsor: Supervisor Aaron Peskin

Dear Rules Committee Members,

On behalf of the San Francisco Veterans Affairs Commission, I am writing to express support for revisions to the Administrative Code of the Veterans Affairs Commission, which the Rules Committee will consider during its meeting on Monday, January 23, 2023. This ordinance will amend the Administrative Code to decrease from 17 to 13 the number of members of the Veterans Affairs Commission, and make corresponding revisions to qualifications and appointing authorities for members.

The Veterans Affairs Commission (VAC) supports the City by advising the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors on matters affecting military veterans residing in San Francisco. Currently, the city is home to an estimated 26,000 veterans, many of whom face needs and challenges related to housing, mental health support, employment opportunities, and access to veterans resources and benefits. The commission is committed to find solutions to these needs by advocating for the veterans community and continually working to provide them support they most certainly have earned.

I have had the privilege of serving on the commission for the past three years, last year and this year as commission president. I am proud of the accomplishments my fellow commissioners and I have achieved on veterans' behalf, and I know we all look forward to meeting more goals in this upcoming year, especially relating to issues of housing, justice court funding, reintegration of veterans into the workforce, and improved mental health services.

I believe revising the Veterans Affairs Commission Administrative Code is an action that will help us meet these many important goals. With current membership at 17, the quorum required for meetings is 9 members. In the past year meeting attendance varied between 10 to 11 members (no meeting had full attendance) and some start times were delayed as we tried to reach the 9 member quorum.

Additionally, with such a large group it has been a challenge to engage every commissioner in committee work and district liaison assignments. After discussing this with the full commission, a strong majority agree that reducing membership to 13 and expanding qualifications (especially adding a seat on the commission for a military spouse/partner) will strengthen us into an even more focused and actively engaged commission. And finally, due to some term limits ending in January 2023, the active commission membership will be 13, which makes the timing of this step very appropriate.

We are grateful to Supervisor Peskin for his sponsorship of this ordinance and to the supervisor's staff, in particular Calvin Yan for his work and assistance throughout this process. As I've previously noted, this is a positive step for the Veterans Affairs Commission and I thank the Rules Committee for their consideration of this ordinance.

Sincerely,

Ikram Mansori
President, Veterans Affairs Commission
City and County of San Francisco Commissioner