

From: [Gus Henry](#)
To: [Carroll, John \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Please oppose Item 4 (cynically opposing SB951)
Date: Thursday, February 8, 2024 5:41:01 PM

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

Clerk John Carroll,

Please oppose Item 4 on the agenda at Land Use and Transportation this Monday, opposing SB951. This is a performative, non-binding measure that does nothing to solve actual problems. Senator Wiener has introduced smart legislation that the City and County of San Francisco is a co-sponsor of, and this is exactly the kind of creative thinking we need.

We do not need to be protecting Safeway parking lots or already developed land in San Francisco. The Coastal Commission adds additional layers of bureaucracy that frequently delay or deny housing. This targets a narrow swath of what is in the Coastal Zone in San Francisco, touching only 5% of the land in it. It's a creative way of protecting actual coastal resources like Ocean Beach while allowing for smart redevelopment opportunities on already developed lots in San Francisco.

Thank you for your attention in this matter!

Gus Henry
gus.henry@icloud.com
1003 Stanyan St
San Francisco, California 94117

From: [Sarah Boudreau](#)
To: [Board of Supervisors \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Comments on Item 5: Fire Code - Lithium-Ion Batteries in Powered Mobility Device
Date: Friday, February 2, 2024 9:19:12 AM

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Hello Supervisors,

I'm Sarah and I'm a SF Bicycle Coalition member, former member of the BOS Bicycle Advisory Committee, and a bike commuter myself. Thanks to you all and the Fire Marshall for your work on this and for being very receptive to feedback from stakeholders on this important issue.

While I support the goals of this ordinance because:

- preventing fires should be a top priority and as the number of e-mobility devices increase on our city streets, we need to make sure they're safe to ride and store
- e-bikes and e-mobility are **great for San Francisco** and making it possible and attractive for people to get on these devices gets us closer to our **sustainability, safety, and congestion reduction commitments** as a city,

I do have concerns about the ordinance as written and encourage the Board of Supervisors to:

- work closely with small businesses on the planned limit requiring devices to be three feet apart when charging to **modify the spacing requirement or make sure there are no harmful consequences** to the small businesses
- **create a pathway for owners of non-compliant devices**
- **encourage adoption of e-bikes** and e-devices with appropriate safety measures, in addition to sending safety messaging from the Fire Department.

Thank you,
Sarah

--

Sarah Boudreau
she/her
boudreau.sarah.m@gmail.com
www.linkedin.com/in/sarahboudreau

From: [Christopher White](#)
To: [Board of Supervisors \(BOS\)](#)
Cc: [Claire Amable](#); [Horrell, Nate \(BOS\)](#); [Kilgore, Preston \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Item 18: SF Bicycle Coalition supports the E-Battery Ordinance
Date: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 10:59:14 AM

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

Dear President Peskin and Board of Supervisors,

On behalf of the thousands of members and constituents of the SF Bicycle Coalition, I write to express our organization's support for Item 18: Fire Code - Lithium-Ion Batteries in Powered Mobility Devices.

Thank you to President Peskin, co-sponsoring Supervisors Melgar, Preston, Chan, and Mandelman, and SF Fire Marshall Cofflin for your leadership on the ordinance.

E-bikes and e-mobility are great things for San Francisco, helping the city reach its urgent climate and mode shift goals. As the number of these devices increase on our city streets, we need the city to promote their adoption while also ensuring devices are safely made. The best way to do this is for devices to be certified by a qualified testing laboratory.

The SF Bicycle Coalition sees the importance of this ordinance in preventing lithium-ion battery fires. We also must ensure that it creates the fewest barriers possible for people adopting these devices. We are happy to see that most of our recommendations have been adopted, and the current ordinance addresses most of the unintentional consequences identified by stakeholders.

After many rounds of amendments, the ordinance is far stronger, but it's not perfect. If approved here today, we would like to see continued efforts from the Board of Supervisors on the following:

1. Working closely with small businesses to reduce the limit requiring devices to be at least three feet apart when charging, to maximize efficiency of space without sacrificing safety;
2. Ensuring that there is a pathway to compliance for owners of non-certified devices;
3. Encouraging a strong collaboration between the SF Department of the Environment and SF Fire Department to craft an informational campaign that encourages informed adoption of e-bikes and e-devices while balancing fire safety messaging.

Thank you again, Supervisors and Fire Marshall Cofflin, for being very receptive to feedback and working actively with stakeholders to make the ordinance as strong as possible. We ask that the Board of Supervisors vote to support this ordinance.

Sincerely,

--

Christopher White

Interim Executive Director

Phone or text: (415) 295-2355 | christopher@sfbike.org

Pronouns: he, him, his

[San Francisco Bicycle Coalition](#)

Promoting the Bicycle for Everyday Transportation

[1720 Market St.](#)

[San Francisco, CA 94102](#)



From: [Horrell, Nate \(BOS\)](#)
To: [Carroll, John \(BOS\)](#)
Cc: [Peskin, Aaron \(BOS\)](#); [Melgar, Myrna \(BOS\)](#); [Preston, Dean \(BOS\)](#); [Low, Jen \(BOS\)](#); [Smeallie, Kyle \(BOS\)](#); [Angulo, Sunny \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: For file 231165
Date: Monday, January 29, 2024 1:18:15 PM

Hi John,

Please also include the following news article in the file for [File No. 231165](#), as well.

[E-Scooters in San Francisco Keep Bursting Into Flames \(sfstandard.com\)](#)

Thank you!

Nate Horrell
Legislative Aide
Board President Aaron Peskin
direct: (415) 554-7419
cell: (315) 560-9558
nate.horrell@sfgov.org

[District 3 Website](#)

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POLITICS & POLICY

San Francisco E-Scooters Are Bursting Into Flames. Lawmakers Want Action

Written by Josh Koehn and Noah Baustin

Published Jan. 09, 2024 • 5:00am



An e-scooter catches fire during an experiment conducted by the Fire Safety Research Institute to demonstrate the risks and dangers of lithium batteries in motorized vehicles. | Courtesy Fire Safety Research Institute

On an early February morning almost two years ago, San Francisco firefighters raced to save four people from a fire in the Fillmore District.

The first crew responded to the scene at 7:17 a.m., just three minutes after receiving a report of an emergency. By then, it was almost too late. Firefighters rescued two people from a window while two others were retrieved from inside the home. The blaze involved an e-scooter battery in the living room of 1212 Turk St., and it would last more than two hours and cause a quarter-million dollars worth of damage to the property, according to an incident report by the fire department.

But the actual cost of the blaze was far steeper. Emergency responders saved two adults and one child, but 64-year-old Richard Lee would later die due to smoke inhalation.

San Francisco firefighters respond to a fire 1212 Turk St. in San Francisco on Feb. 25, 2022. The blaze left one man dead. | Courtesy SFPD

Since 2019, San Francisco has seen a substantial uptick in the number of fires caused by rechargeable lithium-ion batteries. The blazes have become more commonplace alongside the rise of personal e-scooters, e-bikes and other

“micro mobility devices” that use these batteries, which are often stored and charged inside people’s homes. A startling number of injuries and deaths connected to the batteries in recent years—particularly on the East Coast—has prompted new laws to be introduced at all levels of government, including a proposal now being discussed by San Francisco supervisors.

“This is a whole new frontier,” said Supervisor Aaron Peskin, who authored legislation that is currently being reviewed by the city’s Land Use and Transportation Committee. “It’s an evolving field, but we’re working to get it right.”

If passed, Peskin’s ordinance would amend the city’s fire code to restrict how the lithium-ion batteries that power e-scooters, e-bikes and many other modern electronics can be charged and stored in San Francisco.

Going back to 2013, The Standard reviewed every fire that the San Francisco Fire Department responded to that was associated with a rechargeable battery. The data, which runs through early December 2023, is imperfect because the department does not have a specific designation for lithium-ion battery fires. However, the numbers clearly show battery-involved fires in San Francisco have more than tripled in recent years.

San Francisco Rechargeable Battery Fire Incidents

Includes fires in which a battery was involved, though the battery may not have been the source of the fire. 2023 total through Dec. 6.

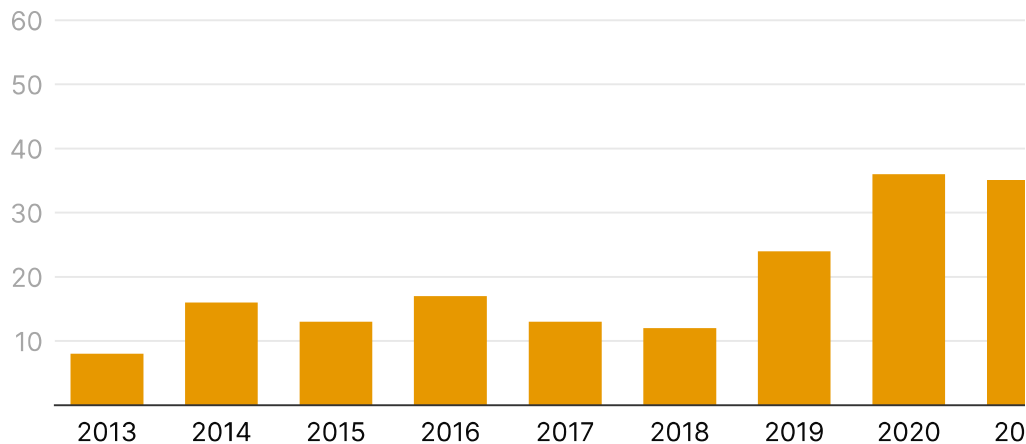


CHART: NOAH BAUSTIN • SOURCE: SAN FRANCISCO FIRE DEPARTMENT



Between 2013 and 2018, San Francisco had an average of 13 fires per year associated with rechargeable batteries, according to the fire department. In 2019, that number doubled to 24 before surging to 36 the following year. In 2022, San Francisco set a record with 58 fires involving battery fires. The fire department logged 41 battery-associated fires in 2023 through Dec. 6.

The rise of lithium-ion battery fires has concerned firefighters across the U.S.

“They do make the fire much harder to combat,” said Robert Rezende, a battalion chief for the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department. “The fire is more aggressive; it creates a more toxic atmosphere.”

New York City has seen an even bigger surge in fires involving rechargeable batteries than San Francisco, and the consequences have been more grave. By mid-November of

last year, New York had seen 17 people die from fires related to electric vehicle batteries in 2023. One fire in 2022 injured nearly 40 people and led firefighters to dangle outside of a Manhattan high-rise to rescue a trapped woman.

Charred remains of e-bikes and e-scooters sit outside of a building in Chinatown after four people were killed by a fire in an e-bike repair shop overnight in New York City on June 20, 2023. | Spencer Platt/Getty Images

Over the last decade, incidents in which a rechargeable device was mentioned in a San Francisco Fire Department report accounted for more than \$10.6 million of property damage, 13 injuries and one death, according to data reviewed by The Standard.

This past Thanksgiving in San Francisco, a lithium-ion battery pack from an electric bike caused a fire at 35 Woodward St. in the Mission, inflicting \$150,000 worth of damage and exposing two residents to smoke inhalation, according to the fire department data.

In June 2020, a person working on his electric bike

accidentally started a fire after puncturing the battery with a screwdriver. Faulty wiring on an electric bike caused a downtown fire in June 2022, and just three months later, a lithium-ion battery malfunctioned while charging, igniting a fire in the Outer Sunset.

Rechargeable battery fires make up a small share of all fires in San Francisco, with the 58 fires associated with rechargeable batteries in 2022 representing less than 1% of the nearly 8,000 fire incidents the department responded to that year. However, landlords in the city have started to revise their lease agreements due to the risk lithium-ion batteries can pose.

“This is an issue that has been on the radar of the association for a little while now, and it is definitely a concern for our members,” said Charley Goss, a spokesperson for the San Francisco Apartment Association, which has roughly 3,000 members who own 90,000 rental units citywide.

Legislation to balance the concerns of property owners and tenants who need access to low-cost transportation options led state Sen. Anthony Portantino (D–Burbank) to introduce SB 712, a bill that proposed to make it illegal for landlords to prohibit tenants from storing and charging up to one device unless they provided renters with a secure, long-term storage option. Gov. Gavin Newsom signed that bill to start this year, but some landlords in the city are still requiring tenants to obtain renters’ insurance as a hedge.

Goss acknowledged that enforcing the provisions of SB 712 in a lease agreement is “basically impossible,” which is why

some San Francisco Apartment Association members are now putting the stipulation for renters insurance into lease agreements.

San Francisco fire crews respond to a blaze on Locksley Avenue in San Francisco on May 9, 2023. Fire officials said the incident was caused by sparks from a lithium-ion battery. | Courtesy SFPD

“Nobody is in the hallway monitoring if someone is bringing in a scooter and whether or not they’re charging it,” Goss said.

Peskin said he has revised his legislation after speaking with e-bike retailers and micro mobility sharing companies Lime and Bay Wheels, the latter of which is owned by Lyft. Another round of revisions is expected after Tuesday’s meeting, but the focus of the legislation is to create an informational public outreach campaign and toughen storage requirements for lithium-ion batteries in residential properties.

“Ultimately, I think the industry is going to evolve where

people who have been dumping inferior products onto the market are going to get winnowed out over time,” Peskin said. “There is even talk in the next few years that lithium-ion batteries will be replaced by sodium-ion batteries. That’s where the industry seems to be going, so this is a stop-gap measure until the industry figures it out.”

Josh Koehn can be reached at josh@sfstandard.com

Noah Baustin can be reached at nbaustin@sfstandard.com

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From: [Carroll, John \(BOS\)](#)
To: "Sarah Boudreau"
Cc: [Peskin, Aaron \(BOS\)](#); [Stefani, Catherine \(BOS\)](#); [Melgar, Myrna \(BOS\)](#); [Low, Jen \(BOS\)](#); [Preston, Dean \(BOS\)](#); [Smeallie, Kyle \(BOS\)](#); [Angulo, Sunny \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: RE: Item 5: Fire Code - Lithium-Ion Batteries in Powered Mobility Devices - BOS File No. 231165 - LUT January 29, 2024
Date: Monday, January 29, 2024 4:07:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Thank you for your comment letter.

I am forwarding your comments to the members of the LUT committee, and I will include your comments in the file for this ordinance matter.

I invite you to review the entire matter on our [Legislative Research Center](#) by following the link below:

-

[Board of Supervisors File No. 231165](#)

John Carroll

Assistant Clerk

Board of Supervisors

San Francisco City Hall, Room 244

San Francisco, CA 94102

(415)554-4445



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From: Sarah Boudreau <boudreau.sarah.m@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, January 29, 2024 12:24 PM

To: Carroll, John (BOS) <john.carroll@sfgov.org>

Subject: Item 5: Fire Code - Lithium-Ion Batteries in Powered Mobility Devices

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

Hello,

My name is Sarah and I am a member of the SF Bicycle Coalition as well as a former member of the Board of Supervisors Bicycle Advisory Committee. Thank you to the Supervisors and Fire **Marshall** for leading this and being receptive to feedback on this ordinance. Although I support the intent of the ordinance because preventing fires is important, e-mobility devices should be checked for safety, and e-bikes and e-mobility are hugely important for San Francisco revitalization, prevention of congestion, and meeting our sustainability commitments as a City, I have some concerns about requiring devices to be three feet apart when charging and the unintentional consequences that limitation may pose, especially for our small specialty businesses. Please consider the proposed amendment regarding this item before passing the ordinance, and work closely with those stakeholders after the ordinance takes effect to adapt to its consequences as needed.

Thank you,

Sarah

--

Sarah Boudreau

she/her

boudreau.sarah.m@gmail.com

www.linkedin.com/in/sarahboudreau

From: [Carroll, John \(BOS\)](#)
To: [Anne Crawford](#)
Cc: [Peskin, Aaron \(BOS\)](#); [Stefani, Catherine \(BOS\)](#); [Melgar, Myrna \(BOS\)](#); [Low, Jen \(BOS\)](#); [Preston, Dean \(BOS\)](#); [Smeallie, Kyle \(BOS\)](#); [Angulo, Sunny \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: RE: Support Item 5: Fire Code - Lithium-Ion Batteries in Powered Mobility - BOS File No. 231165 - LUT January 29, 2024
Date: Monday, January 29, 2024 4:07:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

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[Board of Supervisors File No. 231165](#)

John Carroll

Assistant Clerk

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From: Anne Crawford <annecrawf@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 29, 2024 12:01 PM
To: Carroll, John (BOS) <john.carroll@sfgov.org>
Subject: Support Item 5: Fire Code - Lithium-Ion Batteries in Powered Mobility

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Dear Members of the Board of Supervisors and Fire Marshall,

Thank you for taking on the important topic of battery safety for ebikes and scooters. I experienced a house fire in 2011 due to a faulty wall heater, and I am deeply committed to fire safety (also, grateful for the quick response of the SFFD which saved our house from burning to the ground.)

I want to make sure that this needed safety measure is balanced with the needs of San Franciscans of all income and living situations, to charge their ebike and other mobility vehicles. In particular, I worry about the unintended consequences of requiring devices to be three-feet apart while charging. I would love to ensure that this legislation does not prohibit small specialty businesses dedicated to micro-mobility from establishing a network of safe charging. In particular I would hate to see innovative battery swap programs, such as the one [highlighted in this podcast](#), end up inadvertently prohibited by this ordinance.

Thanks so much for addressing this important issue!

Anne Crawford
Ebike rider

From: [Carroll, John \(BOS\)](#)
To: [Debolina Dutta](#)
Cc: [Peskin, Aaron \(BOS\)](#); [Stefani, Catherine \(BOS\)](#); [Melgar, Myrna \(BOS\)](#); [Low, Jen \(BOS\)](#); [Preston, Dean \(BOS\)](#); [Smeallie, Kyle \(BOS\)](#); [Angulo, Sunny \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: RE: Support Item 5: Fire Code - Lithium-Ion Batteries in Powered Mobility Device - BOS File No. 231165 - LUT January 29, 2024
Date: Monday, January 29, 2024 4:07:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Thank you for your comment letter.

I am forwarding your comments to the members of the LUT committee, and I will include your comments in the file for this ordinance matter.

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From: Debolina Dutta <dutta13@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, January 29, 2024 12:43 PM

To: Carroll, John (BOS) <john.carroll@sfgov.org>

Subject: Support Item 5: Fire Code - Lithium-Ion Batteries in Powered Mobility Device

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

Dear President Peskin, Supervisor Melgar, Supervisor Preston, and Members of the Board of

Supervisors Land Use and Transportation Committee,

I am writing to express my gratitude and support for the ordinance regarding e-mobility devices, spearheaded by President Peskin and co-sponsored by Supervisor Melgar and Supervisor Preston, as well as the invaluable contributions of the San Francisco Fire Marshal. I commend your leadership and dedication in addressing this crucial matter for our city.

I wholeheartedly support this ordinance for several reasons. Firstly, preventing fires should unquestionably be a top priority, particularly as the prevalence of e-mobility devices continues to rise on our city streets. It is imperative that these devices adhere to strict safety standards certified by qualified testing laboratories.

Furthermore, e-bikes and other e-mobility devices offer numerous benefits to San Francisco. They not only provide efficient and sustainable transportation options but also contribute to our city's broader sustainability goals. Encouraging the use of these devices aligns with our commitment to reducing carbon emissions and fostering a greener, more environmentally conscious community.

However, I do have some concerns regarding the requirement stipulating that devices must be three feet apart when charging. While I understand the intention behind this measure, I worry about the potential unintended consequences, particularly for our small specialty businesses. Should the ordinance be approved without this crucial amendment, I urge you to closely collaborate with stakeholders to address any adverse effects that may arise as a result.

I want to express my appreciation to both the Supervisors and the San Francisco Fire Marshal for their receptiveness to feedback throughout this process. Your willingness to engage with stakeholders and incorporate their input has been instrumental in shaping this ordinance into a robust and effective policy.

In conclusion, I strongly endorse this ordinance and commend your efforts in advancing public safety and sustainability in our city. Thank you for your dedication to this important issue, and I look forward to the positive impact this ordinance will have on San Francisco.

Sincerely,
Debolina Dutta
She/Her/Hers

From: [T.Flandrich](#)
To: [Peskin, Aaron \(BOS\)](#); [Melgar, Myrna \(BOS\)](#); [Preston, Dean \(BOS\)](#)
Cc: [Carroll, John \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Item #5. 231165 Lithium-Ion Batteries in Powered Mobility Devices: IN SUPPORT
Date: Monday, January 29, 2024 9:35:26 AM

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29. January 2024

Dear Chair Melgar, Vice Chair Preston & President Peskin,

Thank you for bringing this legislation forward!

Please ensure that the strictest regulation possible is upheld for the safety of all current San Franciscans and future residents.

Thank you again,

Theresa Flandrich
North Beach Tenants Committee

SAN • FRANCISCO TENANTS • UNION

558 Capp Street • San Francisco CA • 94110 • (415) 282-6543 • www.sftu.org

Dear Board of Supervisors and Clerk of the Board, Angela Calvillo,

The San Francisco Tenants Union formally supports File 231165, Fire Code - Lithium-Ion Batteries in Powered Mobility Devices. While we recognize the benefit of green alternatives to cars like e-bikes and e-scooters, we must also recognize San Francisco's unique vulnerability to residential fires as a consequence of prevalent wood structures and high density multi-unit homes.

Residential fires are tragically common in our city, and can be catastrophic. Most of the time, tenants are never able to return despite having a right to do so. In just the last twelve months, e-bikes and e-scooters have caused several residential fires resulting in a number of injuries to tenants.

For more than fifty years, the San Francisco Tenants Union has advocated for the rights of renters. We appreciate that this legislation supports the rights of tenants to store and charge powered mobility devices, while also ensuring that all tenants have basic and common sense safety standards. Cyclist rights do not supersede the right to freedom from bodily harm and residential fires.

We encourage the Board of Supervisors to pass this legislation, and establish best practice requirements for the storage and charging of powered mobility devices.

Thank you very much,

San Francisco Tenants Union

From: [Sharon Ng](#)
To: [Carroll, John \(BOS\)](#); [Peskin, Aaron \(BOS\)](#); [PrestonStaff \(BOS\)](#); [Melgar, Myrna \(BOS\)](#)
Cc: [Yan, Calvin \(BOS\)](#); [Rosa Chen](#); [Lisa Yu](#)
Subject: Chinatown TRIP Lithium-Ion Battery Safety Legislation Letter of Support
Date: Friday, January 26, 2024 5:42:26 PM
Attachments: [Ordinance File 231165 Letter of Support \(Revised\).pdf](#)

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Hi all,

Please see TRIP's letter of support for the Fire Ordinance.

Best,
Sharon

Sharon Ng

Community Planner | Planning and Policy Team

Pronouns: *she/her/hers*

Chinatown Community Development Center

669 Clay Street | San Francisco, CA | 94111

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Transportation
Research and
Improvement
Project

Via Email

January 26, 2024
San Francisco Board of Supervisors
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

RE: Supporting ordinance amending the Fire Code to provide fire protection standards for the charging and storage of lithium-ion batteries used in powered mobility devices

Dear Board of Supervisors,

Chinatown TRIP supports the Ordinance File #231165, Fire Code - Lithium-Ion Batteries in Powered Mobility Devices– which will tighten the regulations on lithium battery charging stations both within residential and commercial buildings. Given the rise in major fires across the country due to lithium battery explosions, it is appropriate to proactively address this topic before it impacts our communities.

Chinatown TRIP was founded during the craft worker's strike in 1976 when a group of Muni bus drivers formed a shuttle service to transport elderly Chinatown seniors to their medical appointments and care workers to homebound seniors. Chinatown TRIP continues to advocate for transit services, traffic circulation, quality of life, and pedestrian safety in the community.

While we believe in a robust and comprehensive transportation network, it should not come at the expense of community safety. We understand that this legislation adds requirements for green alternatives such as e-bike and e-scooter shops, but we feel the legislation is critical in strengthening tenant protection. Given that bike shops are often located in compact, mixed-use buildings, fires that start in bike shops can easily spread to upper residential floors. This may lead to the permanent displacement of long-term residents and cause disproportionate harm to seniors and low-income families. Ordinance File #231165 will require bike shops to install adequate sprinklers, minimizing the spread of a potential fire. Though there isn't an e-bike shop in Chinatown, the legislation would help protect future fires from happening should an e-bike or other shop with lithium batteries appear in densely populated neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

Jon Hee, Chinatown TRIP Co-Chair

From: [Lisa Yu](#)
To: [Peskin, Aaron \(BOS\)](#); [Preston, Dean \(BOS\)](#); [Melgar, Myrna \(BOS\)](#)
Cc: [Yan, Calvin \(BOS\)](#); [Carroll, John \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: SROFU Support Letter for Ordinance File #231165, Fire Code - Lithium-Ion Batteries in Powered Mobility Devices
Date: Friday, January 26, 2024 5:41:40 PM
Attachments: [SROFU support letter on Ordinance File #231165, Fire Code - Lithium-Ion Batteries in Powered Mobility Devices.pdf](#)

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Dear Board of Supervisors,

Please find the attached support letter from SRO Families United Collaborative (SROFU) for Ordinance file #231165 on [Fire Code - Lithium-Ion Batteries in Powered Mobility Devices] that will be heard on Monday, January 29, 2024, Land Use and Transportation Committee (Item # 5). Please include this letter in the package.

Thank you.

Lisa Yu

Senior Community Organizer | Planning and Policy Team

Pronouns: She/Hers

Chinatown Community Development Center

669 Clay St. | San Francisco, CA | 94111

Email: lisa.yu@chinatowncdc.org | C: 415-506-9077

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Via Email
January 26, 2024
San Francisco Board of Supervisors
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

RE: Supporting ordinance amending the Fire Code to provide fire protection standards for the charging and storage of lithium-ion batteries used in powered mobility devices

Dear Board of Supervisors,

The **SRO Families United Collaborative (SROFU)** supports the Ordinance File #231165, Fire Code - Lithium-Ion Batteries in Powered Mobility Devices. The SROFU works with very low-income families with children living in SRO hotels, of which most can be unsafe and have unhealthy housing conditions. The Collaborative works directly with tenants, and has improved resident living conditions through code enforcement, deterring hotel conversions, and abating violations of dozens of buildings citywide. In addition, the collaborative educates tenants on leadership skills and provide educational workshops and community trainings on habitability, fire prevention, and disaster preparedness. We recognize the benefit of green alternatives to cars like e-bikes and e-scooters, however, not at the expense of residential fires caused by the number of lithium-ion battery-based fires that has increased dramatically with the growing prevalence of such batteries in consumer products. We believe fire prevention is a way of tenant protection.

In the past, SRO Families have been a driver of the legislation to strengthen sprinkler system in common areas in SRO residential buildings. Similarly, as stated in File #231165 the ordinance requires a fire sprinkler system that complies with Section 903.3.1.1 of the Fire Code. This requirement for bike shops to install adequate sprinklers further expands protection of tenants to ensure that fires can be stopped or prevented from spreading to residential units upstairs. Sprinklers are critical given that many bike shops are in mixed-used buildings. Residential fires are tragically common in our city with majority wood framed buildings, and can be catastrophic especially in densely populated neighborhoods. Like in Chinatown, once a fire burns through a building, it often permanently displaces long term residents- especially for seniors and low-income families. Protections need to be required due to high building density, the prevalence of wood structures, and high occupancy in many buildings to prevent displacement among low-income residents.

We encourage the Board of Supervisors to pass this legislation, and establish best practice requirements for the storage and charging of powered mobility devices that ensures all tenants have basic and common safety standards.

Sincerely,



Juan Garcia
Sr. Community Organizing Supervisor
SRO Families United Collaborative

From: [Carroll, John \(BOS\)](#)
To: [John McBirney](#)
Cc: [Melgar, Myrna \(BOS\)](#); [Low, Jen \(BOS\)](#); [Preston, Dean \(BOS\)](#); [Smeallie, Kyle \(BOS\)](#); [Peskin, Aaron \(BOS\)](#); [Angulo, Sunny \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: RE: E-bike battery hearing - BOS File No. 231165 - LUT Meeting January 29, 2024
Date: Friday, January 26, 2024 3:24:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Thank you for your comment letter.

I am forwarding your comments to the members of the LUT committee, and I will include your comments in the file for this ordinance matter.

I invite you to review the entire matter on our Legislative Research Center by following the link below:

[Board of Supervisors File No. 231165](#)

John Carroll
Assistant Clerk

Board of Supervisors
San Francisco City Hall, Room 244
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415)554-4445



Click [here](#) to complete a Board of Supervisors Customer Service Satisfaction form.

The [Legislative Research Center](#) provides 24-hour access to Board of Supervisors legislation and archived matters since August 1998.

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-----Original Message-----

From: John McBirney <drjohn@mcbirney.com>
Sent: Friday, January 26, 2024 2:40 PM
To: Carroll, John (BOS) <john.carroll@sfgov.org>
Subject: E-bike battery hearing

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

Mr. Carroll, I'm a city resident (233 Franklin St) who uses my bike for all transportation here and don't want that to be restricted by the new rules. I'm unable to attend the council meeting Monday to speak in support of SF Bike Coalition's proposed changes in the e-bike battery ordinance. Could you please forward this to the council members who will be voting on the ordinance?

Thanks very much!

John McBirney

From: [Cofflin, Ken \(FIR\)](#)
To: [Peskin, Aaron \(BOS\)](#); [Melgar, Myrna \(BOS\)](#); [Preston, Dean \(BOS\)](#)
Cc: [Kilgore, Preston \(BOS\)](#); [Horrell, Nate \(BOS\)](#); [Heiken, Emma \(BOS\)](#); [Robin Pam](#); [Brett Thurber](#); [Cyrus Hall](#); [Carroll, John \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: FW: Please continue Item 4 of Land Use committee: Li-ion Batteries in Powered Mobility Devices
Date: Wednesday, January 10, 2024 2:01:26 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Sup Peskin et al,

Please see my responses to the Bicycle Coalition's requests for consideration in **RED** below.

Fire Marshal Ken Cofflin
San Francisco Fire Department
698 2nd Street, Rm 109
San Francisco, CA 94107
415-558-3320 Office
(he, him, his)



From: Peskin, Aaron (BOS) <aaron.peskin@sfgov.org>
Sent: Monday, January 8, 2024 2:18 PM
To: Christopher White <christopher@sfbike.org>; Melgar, Myrna (BOS) <myrna.melgar@sfgov.org>; Preston, Dean (BOS) <dean.preston@sfgov.org>
Cc: Kilgore, Preston (BOS) <preston.kilgore@sfgov.org>; Horrell, Nate (BOS) <nate.horrell@sfgov.org>; Heiken, Emma (BOS) <emma.heiken@sfgov.org>; Robin Pam <robin@kidsafesf.com>; Brett Thurber <brett@newwheel.net>; Cyrus Hall <cyrusphall@gmail.com>; Carroll, John (BOS) <john.carroll@sfgov.org>; Cofflin, Ken (FIR) <ken.cofflin@sfgov.org>
Subject: Re: Please continue Item 4 of Land Use committee: Li-ion Batteries in Powered Mobility Devices

Looping in the Fire Marshal for his expertise.

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Christopher White <christopher@sfbike.org>
Sent: Monday, January 8, 2024 2:06:51 PM
To: Peskin, Aaron (BOS) <aaron.peskin@sfgov.org>; Melgar, Myrna (BOS) <myrna.melgar@sfgov.org>; Preston, Dean (BOS) <dean.preston@sfgov.org>
Cc: Kilgore, Preston (BOS) <preston.kilgore@sfgov.org>; Horrell, Nate (BOS) <nate.horrell@sfgov.org>; Heiken, Emma (BOS) <emma.heiken@sfgov.org>; Robin Pam <robin@kidsafesf.com>; Brett Thurber <brett@newwheel.net>; Cyrus Hall <cyrusphall@gmail.com>; Carroll, John (BOS) <john.carroll@sfgov.org>
Subject: Please continue Item 4 of Land Use committee: Li-ion Batteries in Powered Mobility Devices

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

Dear President Peskin, Supervisor Melgar, and Supervisor Preston,

First, I would like to thank President Peskin for your leadership and the committee for taking up this important issue and for making amendments to the original ordinance after hearing feedback from constituents and stakeholders.

On behalf of the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition, as well as other stakeholders including Kid Safe SF, The New Wheel, and several individual advocates, I am reaching out to ask that this item be continued in order to consider other amendments we believe will make the ordinance stronger. The amendments we wish to be considered can be found below:

1. A reduction from 3 feet to 12 inches between charging UL or similarly certified devices. **The Fire Marshal's Office (FMO) has reached out to UL to see if they have more information gathered during UL2849 testing and we're waiting for a response or lead to more information. Sans additional testing information, the FMO recommends maintaining the 3 feet separation while charging. When devices are stored only, 12 inches should be appropriate.**
2. A removal of limitations on the numbers of UL or similarly certified devices in Group R-2 occupancy, allowing the State limits to stand. **State requirements tend to be less restrictive than what is needed in San Francisco because there are no other cities in the state like San Francisco due to our types of construction (old/wood framed buildings), the spacing of buildings (zero lot lines), and our topography (many hills). Adding more than four (4) devices per dwelling unit, without both a fire alarm with smoke detection and a fire sprinkler system, increases the fire load and chances for a Li-ion battery fire to occur. *Example:* A 20-unit building could potentially have up to 80 e- bikes/scooter stored within its walls when allowing a maximum of four.**
3. A path for current owners of non-UL/EN compliant devices. Many will not be able to afford to just buy a new device, and will live out of compliance, or just sell/dump their device. **How would this suggestion be enforced? How would the AHJ verify that the device was purchased prior to Jan 2024? Even with allowing persons to keep their devices until they are no longer useable, the fire hazard still exists every day and this ongoing hazard needs to be addressed immediately.**
4. In the case of non-UL or EN-certified devices in multi-family housing, maintain a limit on devices, based on input from stakeholders. **If non-listed device is purchased then it should be stored outside of the building.**
5. In 325.6 (f), increase the threshold number of e-mobility devices charging in M occupancy units that would require a sprinkler system to 10, as long as the devices are UL or EN certified. Anything less could be a very high burden for retailers specifically. **10 is an excessive number of devices being charged for an unsprinklered space. Each device charging adds a potential**

for a fire. If more than five are needed to be charged indoors, then sprinklers and fire alarm should be installed.

6. In regards to Section 325.6, change the language to something like "For permanent charging (consistent charging of the same device for more than 24 hours) and charging more than 2 devices, extension cords and power strips shall not be used" for UL or EN listed devices. Charging UL or similarly certified devices on an extension cord or power strip for short periods does not pose a significant risk. FMO recommends leaving the extension cords and power strips prohibition as written, as this is not overly onerous and it improves safety.
7. That the Department of the Environment lead the public awareness campaign with support from the Fire Department to balance safety messaging with encouragement to safely adopt these climate-friendly modes. The Dept of Env does not enforce the fire code. Public safety messaging shall come from the Fire Marshal's Office as the AHJ.

Thank you, President Peskin, for your leadership on this issue and to the rest of the committee for your support. We believe the ordinance will be stronger with our proposed amendments and will not cause unintentional consequences. Please move to continue this item so these changes can be considered.

Sincerely,

--

Christopher White

Interim Executive Director

Phone or text: (415) 295-2355 | christopher@sfbike.org

Pronouns: he, him, his

[San Francisco Bicycle Coalition](#)

Promoting the Bicycle for Everyday Transportation

[1720 Market St.](#)

[San Francisco, CA 94102](#)



From: kash.warmplanetbikes.com
To: [Carroll, John \(BOS\)](#)
Cc: [Peskin, Aaron \(BOS\)](#); [MelgarStaff \(BOS\)](#); [PrestonStaff \(BOS\)](#); [Horrell, Nate \(BOS\)](#); brett@newwheel.net
Subject: Additional public comment for 231165 [Fire Code - Lithium-Ion Batteries in Powered Mobility Devices]
Date: Wednesday, January 10, 2024 10:33:50 AM

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

John-

Please attach this public comment to :

231165 [Fire Code - Lithium-Ion Batteries in Powered Mobility Devices]

This legislation addresses two completely separate issues. The first, fires caused by off brand and deliberately modified ebikes that do not meet UL and EN safety certification standards, has been well addressed. I thank the fire marshal and the Supervisor's office for taking industry input on this.

The second, completely independent issue; overloaded electrical wiring, has also been well addressed except for one specific point, the safe use of extension cords.

In several places, the legislation reads, "Extension cords shall not be used" no exceptions, no modifiers. That's the whole of it.

It's easy to create a blanket prohibition and say problem solved, but when this prohibition is unrealistic then it gets ignored and the opportunity to model good behavior is lost.

This prohibition, combined with an unrealistically wide 3 foot bike spacing in residential bike rooms, guarantees that as soon as the available slots are filled - and we have decades of experience with traditional bike rooms to guarantee this is going to happen in about a week - people will start parking bikes in between the ones that have legitimate rack spaces. Then they will install splitters and extension cords so that they can charge multiple bikes per outlet.

If one of those cords has an amp rating that is too low to handle multiple simultaneous chargers - and without clear guidance this is guaranteed to happen - there is the danger that it will overheat and cause a fire.

The solution is to space the bikes a reasonable distance apart, making it physically impossible to insert more bikes in between them. The worry that one battery fire will set off a chain reaction in adjacent batteries is unlikely, but even if this happens, the fire rating of the storage room should be sufficient to contain the blaze.

A secondary concern is that even if an extension cord is being used within the rated maximum on its label, and in a way that is legal and safe if any other device type or any other charger is plugged into it, this special carve out will be used by an insurer to deny coverage.

There are real, necessary and safe uses of extension cords. Safe use is an engineering problem and there is wording that can model safe use.

Electrical components like extension cords have ratings clearly marked on their packaging. If a user does not exceed them, the setup is safe. We should be leveraging that rather than making a blanket prohibition that ignores this and results in being ignored.

UL certified ebike chargers are low load devices at between 2 and 4 amps, maximum about 500 to 600 watts. An average space heater can be 1500 watts/12.5 amps, or almost 3 times the load, and there's no prohibition against using an extension cord with one of those.

A charger is a charger is a charger. It has an amp rating printed right on the case. Match the cord to the load and the setup is safe. End of story.

I have some suggested language. I'm not wedded to it, and I'm not an expert so please consult a certified electrician for input.

1. One outlet per bike. One cord per outlet.
2. No daisy chaining, defined as multiple bikes or multiple cords plugged into a single outlet, splitter, or extension cord. No plugging several cords into each other to make a longer cord.
3. The cord rating must be equal or greater than the load. This is easily satisfied, 15 and 13 amp cords are the most common extension cords sold.
4. Change the minimum width between UL certified bikes with removable batteries in storage areas to the same 6" inches as is allowed for batteries built into frames.

From: [Christopher White](#)
To: [Peskin, Aaron \(BOS\)](#); [Melgar, Myrna \(BOS\)](#); [Preston, Dean \(BOS\)](#)
Cc: [Kilgore, Preston \(BOS\)](#); [Horrell, Nate \(BOS\)](#); [Heiken, Emma \(BOS\)](#); [Robin Pam](#); [Brett Thurber](#); [Cyrus Hall](#); [Carroll, John \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Please continue Item 4 of Land Use committee: Li-ion Batteries in Powered Mobility Devices
Date: Monday, January 8, 2024 2:11:14 PM

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Dear President Peskin, Supervisor Melgar, and Supervisor Preston,

First, I would like to thank President Peskin for your leadership and the committee for taking up this important issue and for making amendments to the original ordinance after hearing feedback from constituents and stakeholders.

On behalf of the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition, as well as other stakeholders including Kid Safe SF, The New Wheel, and several individual advocates, I am reaching out to ask that this item be continued in order to consider other amendments we believe will make the ordinance stronger. The amendments we wish to be considered can be found below:

- A reduction from 3 feet to 12 inches between charging UL or similarly certified devices
- A removal of limitations on the numbers of UL or similarly certified devices in Group R-2 occupancy, allowing the State limits to stand
- A path for current owners of non-UL/EN compliant devices. Many will not be able to afford to just buy a new device, and will live out of compliance, or just sell/dump their device.
- In the case of non-UL or EN-certified devices in multi-family housing, maintain a limit on devices, based on input from stakeholders.
- In 325.6 (f), increase the threshold number of e-mobility devices charging in M occupancy units that would require a sprinkler system to 10, as long as the devices are UL or EN certified. Anything less could be a very high burden for retailers specifically.
- In regards to Section 325.6, change the language to something like "For permanent charging (consistent charging of the same device for more than 24 hours) and charging more than 2 devices, extension cords and power strips shall not be used" for UL or EN listed devices. Charging UL or similarly certified devices on an extension cord or power strip for short periods does not pose a significant risk.
- That the Department of the Environment lead the public awareness campaign with support from the Fire Department to balance safety messaging with encouragement to safely adopt these climate-friendly modes

Thank you, President Peskin, for your leadership on this issue and to the rest of the committee for your support. We believe the ordinance will be stronger with our proposed amendments and will not cause unintentional consequences. Please move to continue this item so these changes can be considered.

Sincerely,

--

Christopher White

Interim Executive Director

Phone or text: (415) 295-2355 | christopher@sfbike.org

Pronouns: he, him, his

[San Francisco Bicycle Coalition](#)

Promoting the Bicycle for Everyday Transportation

[1720 Market St.](#)

[San Francisco, CA 94102](#)



Anglea Calvillo, Clerk of the Board
Board of Supervisors
City and County of San Francisco



December 11, 2023

RE: 231165 Fire Code- Lithium-Ion Batteries in Powered Mobility Devices

Dear Board:

I am writing on behalf of the National Bicycle Dealers Association (NBDA) representing Specialty Bicycle Retailers nationwide and within the City and County of San Francisco regarding the upcoming discussion around amendment of fire code.

The National Bicycle Dealers Association, formed in 1946, is the sole organization representing Specialty Bicycle Retailers across North America. We have over 700 retailer members, representing more than 900 retail doors. We also enjoy associate membership from several bicycle brands, advocacy organizations and other firms within the bicycle industry. Our membership is diverse and represents all segments of the bicycle trade industry serving consumers of all ages.

The safety of the products that we sell to consumers is of top priority for the NBDA and our members. Since 2022 the NBDA has taken a leading role working in advocating for safety standards relative to Lithium-Ion Batteries. The NBDA works with industry experts and stakeholders. The NBDA has on retainer leading experts in the field, Human Powered Solutions, both Jay Townley and Mike Fritz. The NBDA continues to collaborate with both the NYC Council and FDNY in research, advisement, and development. We have worked closely with the team at UL and both HPS and the NBDA have members on the UL Technical Committees, including UL Technical Committee 1487 newly formed and focused on Battery Storage and Containment Standards.

We have been working closely with the CPSC to advise, and this past July testified in Maryland, urging the CPSC that in the interest of public safety it should be required that eBikes or eBike Systems installed on eBikes are certified to UL 2849 by accredited certification organization (s).

Since the CPSC issued their statement in December 2022, urging brands to comply with UL2849, brands have been moving to compliancy.

I have reviewed your agenda materials and would add a few comments. I would suggest clarification of confirming testing, certification and listing to UL 2849, which is inclusive of UL 2271. This testing and certification should be done by a Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory (NRTL). There is low probability of a failure of a lithium-ion battery meeting the testing, compliance and listing requirements of UL 2849 by a NRTL.

We have been diligent to educate our members on the safe handling and storage of Lithium-Ion batteries. The NBDA retailer base is collaborative and responsive, retailers want to sell only safe products. The NBDA and team are available for resource as needed.

It would be my recommendation that San Francisco and New York City both make amendments to allow Bicycle Retailers to stock, store, charge, display and sell e-bikes and lithium-ion batteries that are tested, certified, listed and labeled by a NRTL – without further requirements as long as they are following the approved protocols and recommendations for the storage, charging, display and sale of e-bikes and lithium-ion batteries. With that, I would add, San Francisco and New York City make amendments to require bike shops to follow the approved protocols as provided by the NBDA and vetted and endorsed by the FDNY and Fire Department of San Francisco.

Another suggestion I would share, is to frame the recommendations and protocols for apartment buildings and multioccupancy buildings around the above, requiring certificates of compliance to UL 2849 from a NRTL, which is provided by listing and labeling on e-bikes or lithium-ion batteries or a current certificate of compliance by tenants to managers to allow complying e-bikes and lithium-ion batteries in apartments or offices after the individual owner signs off on the mandatory protocols. I am worried that limiting the number of units a person could have prohibits the expansion of the sport and joy of cycling, health benefits and climate positive impacts.

Finally, please consider pushing back compliance for bicycle retailers for three (3) months to allow more testing, certification and listing by e-bike brands and wholesalers. This will result in more bike shops having current certificates of compliance and more brands and wholesalers to provide bike shops with listed and labeled products. It will also allow UL Technical Committee 1487 on Battery Storage and Containment Standards to advance its development of testing requirements and certification of charging and storage cabinets.

In summary, the NBDA wishes to protect our retailers and consumers, our customers alike from the risks that poorly designed and manufactured systems pose. We are ready and available to help formulate best practices forward and ensure that retailers can conduct safe business practice while ensuring safety for all.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss our concerns and suggestions in greater detail at any time.

Sincerely,

Heather Mason
President
National Bicycle Dealers Association
518-847-2419
heather@nbda.com