



January 9, 2024

San Francisco Board of Supervisors
Budget and Finance Committee
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
City Hall, Room 244
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

**Re: File No. 230862 Vacant or Abandoned Commercial Storefronts Registration and Fee Suspension—
SUPPORT**

Dear Budget and Finance Committee Members,

I write you on behalf of BOMA San Francisco regarding the proposed ordinance to amend the Building Code to temporarily suspend the annual registration requirement and registration fee for vacant or abandoned commercial storefronts through December 31, 2024.

Given the high prevalence of commercial office vacancies as well as changing preferences for retail, many BOMA members face significant challenges in filling their vacant commercial storefronts. This issue is particularly challenging in the Financial District, Mid-Market, and SOMA neighborhoods. The difficulty in filling these spaces is not for lack of effort nor the desire to hold out for better deals. The changes in foot traffic patterns coupled with high buildout and operating costs have made many retailers weary of opening a small business downtown in the current environment.

Waiving the registration requirement, registration fee, and annual inspection requirement from a licensed professional would grant temporary relief to building owners and managers who are making good faith efforts to fill vacant commercial retail spaces in a challenging environment. Furthermore, this proposal strikes the right balance of reducing administrative burdens while still requiring that proper measures are taken to avoid urban blight or dangerous conditions. Over the course of the year, BOMA would welcome the opportunity to collaborate with department officials, the mayor, and the Board of Supervisors on a more effective system for reporting and inspecting vacant commercial storefronts.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal. Please do not hesitate to reach out if BOMA staff or our membership can answer any questions regarding the impact of this proposal on our industry.

Sincerely,

John R. Bryant
CEO, BOMA San Francisco