Thomas R. Insel, MD
Pleasanton, California
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April 23, 2026
San Francisco Board of Supervisors Rules Committee
City Hall
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

RE: Support for the Appointment of Tara Gamboa-Eastman to the San Francisco Behavioral Health Commission

Dear Supervisors Mandelman, Walton, and Sherrill,

Over the course of more than four decades, I have worked across mental health research, public policy, and care delivery, including serving as Director of the National Institute of Mental Health from 2002 to 2015, advising Governor Gavin Newsom on behavioral health, chairing the Steinberg Institute Board, and helping build several mental health organizations focused on improving care. One lesson has remained constant: better outcomes depend not only on good ideas, but on effective implementation.

Tara understands that.

There are many people who can describe behavioral health policy, but few who can work effectively at the intersection of policy and execution. Tara is in the latter group. She has developed a strong command of the policy landscape, and just as importantly, she understands how systems respond once policies are put into place, where they break down, and what it takes to improve performance.

I have also been impressed with her ability to engage across different perspectives. Behavioral health systems are inherently fragmented, and progress requires people who can work across those divides while maintaining a focus on outcomes. Tara approaches this work with clarity and discipline, helping move conversations toward practical solutions. The Commission's role is not only oversight, but ensuring that systems deliver better results. That requires people who are focused on implementation and outcomes, not just design. Tara brings that perspective.

I am happy to support her appointment to the San Francisco Behavioral Health Commission. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Thomas R. Insel, MD
Co-Founder: Benchmark Health, Vanna Health
Former Director: NIMH/NIH/DHHS (2002- 2015)

April 19th, 2026

To the Rules Committee, Board of Supervisors:

My name is Lauren Vega, and I am writing to offer my strong support for Michael (Mirac) Fittro's candidacy for an appointment to the Behavioral Health Commission. It is a privilege to recommend him, and as his former case manager at the Positive Resource Center (PRC), I have witnessed his remarkable journey from a service recipient to a thriving community advocate.

When I first began working with Mirac in 2023, he was navigating the difficult process of rebuilding a life that had been derailed by addiction and untreated mental health challenges. Since then, Mirac has demonstrated an exceptional commitment to recovery, managing his mental health, professional development, and community integration. His journey—from his initial role at Peet's Coffee to his professional growth within nonprofits, a law firm, and his current position with the San Francisco Human Services Agency—is a testament to his resilience. Mirac has successfully met and exceeded all requirements while a recipient of services at PRC - maintaining consistent sobriety, stable employment, and independent housing.

Mirac's candidacy is unique because it bridges the gap between lived and professional experience. He understands the complexities of the City's behavioral health and substance use systems from the inside out. He is a disciplined, empathetic, and driven individual who is deeply invested in the well-being of his community.

With his firsthand experience as a consumer of San Francisco's behavioral health services and his current professional expertise, Mirac offers a vital perspective. I am confident his passion and lived experience will make him an invaluable asset to the Commission.

Should you have any questions about my support, my management of his case, or need additional information, please email me at Lauren.Vega@prcsf.org

Respectfully,

Lauren Vega

Manager, Workforce Development | Positive Resource Center (PRC)
Phone: (415) 244-4577

ADDRESSED TO:
Rules Committee, San Francisco Board of Supervisors
Supervisor Walton, Chair
Supervisor Sherrill, Vice Chair
Supervisor Mandelman, Member & President of the Board of Supervisors

RE: Michael Fittro For Behavior Health Commission
FROM: Aaron Bos-Lun | Executive Director, Men4Choice

Dear Rules Committee and San Francisco Board of Supervisors,

I write to give my strong recommendation to **Michael Fittro** for consideration for appointment to the San Francisco Behavioral Health Commission. This body plays a critical role in overseeing behavioral health and substance use disorder policy, and it requires individuals with sound judgment, intellectual rigor, and a deep commitment to public service. Michael Fittro is an outstanding young leader who possesses these qualities in abundance.

I have known Michael for 3 years through my role as Executive Director of Men4Choice - first as a standout Fellow in our program, and subsequently as a staff member where he peer coached and mentored a cohort of Fellows. In both capacities, he demonstrated a rare combination of policy acumen, analytical skill, and a grounded commitment to improving people's lives.

As Deputy Executive Director previously, I oversaw our Youth Fellowship program, which Michael successfully completed in Spring 2023. Having worked closely with hundreds of young leaders, I can say with confidence that Michael stands out. He is thoughtful, intellectually curious, and driven by a genuine desire to serve others. He brings prior experience in state government, including legislative work in the Georgia Senate, as well as leadership at the statewide level with the Georgia Young Democrats - backgrounds that give him a strong foundation for understanding public systems and policy implementation.

During the Fellowship, Michael distinguished himself through his ability to analyze complex issues, engage thoughtfully in discussions, and translate ideas into action. He demonstrated not only an understanding of policy, but also how policy affects real people, an essential perspective for work involving behavioral health systems, medical institutions, and public accountability.

Because of his performance, Michael was selected to join our staff as a Fellowship Coordinator, where he coached and mentored the next cohort. In this role, he showed strong organizational skills, attention to detail, and the ability to guide others through complex subject matter. He was highly effective in ensuring participants not only completed the program, but remained engaged as active contributors beyond it, an indicator of both leadership and follow-through.

Importantly, Michael also took on the responsibility of conducting research and drafting weekly policy memos for senior stakeholders, including a memo prepared for the Second Gentleman of the United States. This work required synthesizing large volumes of information, analyzing policy and media developments, and presenting clear, digestible insights for high-level audiences. He executed this responsibility with professionalism, precision, and strong analytical judgment, skills directly

relevant to producing reports and recommendations for a governing body like the Behavioral Health Commission.

The responsibilities of the Commission - touring facilities, evaluating systems, researching policy, assessing budgets, investigating public concerns, and producing clear reports - require exactly the kind of discipline and capability that Michael has demonstrated. He has shown he can engage seriously with complex systems, ask the right questions, and translate findings into actionable insights.

Just as importantly, Michael approaches this work with integrity and a strong sense of responsibility to the public. He is someone who takes seriously the human impact of policy decisions, and who brings both empathy and rigor to his work.

In conclusion, I enthusiastically recommend Michael Fittro for appointment to the San Francisco Behavioral Health Commission. He has the intellect, work ethic, and commitment to public service necessary to contribute meaningfully to this role, and I am confident he will approach the position with the seriousness and professionalism it demands.

Thank you for your consideration.

Aaron Bos-Lun

Executive Director
Men4Choice

May 3, 2026

April 17th, 2026

To whom it may concern:

My name is Anna Basilashvili, and I am Michael (Mirac) Fittro's direct supervisor at the San Francisco Human Services Agency. I am writing this letter in support of Michael's candidacy for an appointment to the San Francisco Behavioral Health Commission. I have witnessed Michael's dedication and passion for public service firsthand and seen his keen ability to connect uniquely and deeply with our clients who are experiencing great personal difficulties. These community members include but are not limited to the elderly, immigrant communities, unhoused community neighbors, individuals struggling with substance use disorder, and individuals needing round-the-clock behavioral health services.

Since Michael joined my unit at SFHSA, he has demonstrated through his work, his thorough knowledge of state and local health programs. This includes extensive experience working with Medi-Cal, its contracted providers, and San Francisco–based institutions within the Medi-Cal and Healthy San Francisco networks.

Michael continues to go to every length possible to ensure our clients have the benefits that they are eligible for and goes the extra mile to prepare them for the path that lies ahead regarding processes and any potential hurdles. Michael has shown his ability to de-escalate high-intensity situations and remain calm and professional. He has coordinated with local agencies and organizations with approval from myself or other supervisors to escalate and expedite certain cases which gave cause for immediate action. Michael leads with a strong sense of urgency and understanding of the great impact our work has at SFHSA.

Michael is a pragmatic and thoughtful leader with a heart for service. If you have any questions about his work or my support for his appointment to the SF BHC, please email me at anna.basilashvili@sfgov.org.

Thank you,

Anna Basilashvili

April 19th, 2026

Leaders:

It is my tremendous privilege to recommend Michael Fittro to the Behavioral Health Commission.

I have had the opportunity to work with Michael in the Georgia General Assembly on numerous efforts, Michael is the definition of professionalism and inclusiveness.

I am a person in long term recovery from addiction, my entire professional career is one in government and policy. I have served on commissions and, as a staff member, vetted applicants. I assure you that Michael will be a positive addition to the Behavioral Health Commission.

Michael has the lived experience, the professional experience, the discernment, and the compassion to be a value add member.

I believe that, with his lived experience as a survivor of the Addiction Epidemic, MIchael will bring an essential perspective to the work of the commission. Every voice, view, and perspective is important - the voice, view, and perspective of survivors is essential.

Michael is a uniter - he brings people together and seeks to find inclusive solutions. Michael will bring honor, dignity, and a sense of compassion to the commission.

I have lived in California. I have been in active addiction in California. I have every confidence that Michael will be a member who can combine the needs of the community with the values of those impacted by the Addiction Epidemic.

I am at your service to discuss Michael in any regard. My every best wish for success as the Behavioral Health Commission works to serve my brothers and sisters impacted by the Addiction Epidemic.

For Recovery,

Jeff Breedlove
CEO
The American Addiction Recovery Association

www.eliminatethewhisper.org

#EndTheWhisper

SFLGBT CENTER

17 April 2026

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of Michael Fittro's candidacy for an appointment to the San Francisco Behavioral Health Commission. Michael Fittro was employed briefly with the Center in late 2022/early 2023 in our Youth Services program.

Michael had recently transitioned to San Francisco and found himself in an incredibly challenging place. Ultimately, Michael needed to stabilize before he could provide services. After exiting the Center, Michael set off on that journey to stability. Not only did he achieve that goal, but he is also thriving. Michael is currently employed in San Francisco's Human Services Agency. He also serves as Vice President of the San Francisco Young Democrats and serves on the Board of Governors of the American Addiction Recovery Association (AARA).

Michael's lived experience will allow him to effectively represent and advocate on behalf of many of San Francisco's youth, especially our LGBTQ+ youth. I highly recommend him for the Behavioral Health Commission.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Valles
Executive Director
jenniferv@sfcenter.org

PINELLAS COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
315 COURT STREET • CLEARWATER, FLORIDA 33756 • PHONE (727) 464-3568
www.pinellas.gov

KATHLEEN PETERS

April 20, 2026

To the San Francisco Board of Supervisors:

I am writing in strong support of Michael Fittro's candidacy for appointment to the San Francisco Behavioral Health Commission. I have known Michael for over a decade and offer this as both a professional and personal recommendation.

Michael worked for me as a full-time intern from November 2016 through November 2017, where he assisted with constituent services, policy research, communications, and public engagement. He demonstrated a strong ability to analyze complex statutes and local codes and translate them into actionable insights that informed my work in the Florida Legislature. His professionalism, adaptability, and positive attitude made him a very valuable member of my team.

During my time in the Legislature, I focused heavily on mental health and substance use reform. Michael brought a deeply personal perspective to this work, shaped by his own lived experiences. He courageously shared his story—including his experience with conversion therapy—in support of policy change, including testimony before the Tampa City Council that contributed to the successful passage of a ban on conversion therapy for minors.

Michael has faced significant personal challenges, including mental health struggles, addiction, homelessness, and profound personal loss. Despite this, he has shown resilience and a sustained commitment to growth and service. Since relocating to San Francisco in 2022, he has accessed care, deepened his understanding of behavioral health, and achieved long-term recovery, celebrating three years of sobriety in March 2026.

He has remained committed to serving others through advocacy, volunteerism, and supporting individuals in early recovery. Michael combines lived experience with a strong understanding of public policy and systems, allowing him to approach behavioral health challenges with both empathy and practicality.

I am proud to recommend Michael Fittro for this appointment. He would be a thoughtful and effective contributor to the Commission's work advancing equitable, person-centered behavioral health solutions. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Respectfully,

Kathleen Peters, Commissioner – District 6
Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners

The LGBT ASYLUM PROJECT
by the Center for Immigrant Protection

April 19, 2026

Dear Board of Supervisors Rules Committee,

I am pleased to write in strong support of Michael Mirac Fittro and his candidacy for appointment to the Behavioral Health Commission.

Michael has consistently demonstrated a deep and genuine commitment to the wellbeing of several communities, including immigrants, LGBTQ+ individuals, and those who too often face barriers to accessing essential services. He is not someone who speaks about community care in theory. He actively shows up, does the work, and follows through on his commitments.

Our organization has had the privilege of witnessing Michael's dedication firsthand. He independently organized and led a highly successful fundraising event that raised $10,000 in support of our nonprofit. What stood out even more than the financial success of the event was the care, determination, and integrity he brought to every step of the process. Michael is someone who keeps his word, puts his whole heart into what he does, and remains steadfast in supporting causes he believes in.

These same qualities make him exceptionally well suited for public service. Michael understands that healthcare access, behavioral health support, and dignity in care are not abstract policy issues, and that they are life-changing necessities, especially for undocumented immigrants, asylum seekers, and LGBTQ+ community members who often face compounded barriers. His desire to ensure vulnerable residents are connected to programs such as Healthy SF Medical Program reflects both compassion and practical leadership.

Michael would bring urgency, accountability, transparency, and authentic community-centered advocacy to the Behavioral Health Commission. He understands how systems impact real people, and he has already demonstrated the initiative and leadership necessary to help improve those systems.

I strongly encourage his appointment and believe San Francisco would greatly benefit from his service on the Commission.

Sincerely,

Kenan Arun
Executive Director
The LGBT Asylum Project

April 18, 2026

Dear San Francisco Board of Supervisors,

I am pleased to write in strong support of Michael Fittro for his appointment to the San Francisco Behavioral Health Commission.

I had the privilege of working with Michael during his time as Impact Officer for the San Francisco Hub of the Global Shapers Community, where I served as his Community Champion for the broader region. Through witnessing his leadership in action, I have come to know him as a deeply compassionate, thoughtful, and resilient leader.

What distinguishes Michael most is his genuine care for individual people. He approaches community work person by person, ensuring that those around him feel seen, supported, and treated with dignity. His leadership is grounded in empathy, and he consistently shows up with warmth, presence, and integrity.

This care is reflected in the experiences of those he serves, both in community work and in his professional responsibilities. In reflecting on his impact, I revisited a note of appreciation written to him by someone he personally supported:

> "Because of you, I am able to eat today and this month... These are no small feats. You gave me the chance to make it to my next chapter... You made me feel comforted, secure, and supported, and you took the time to truly help rather than passing me along. Thank you for what you are doing for San Francisco."

This kind of response speaks to both his effectiveness and the trust he builds with others, qualities that are essential in behavioral health settings.

During his time in the Global Shapers Community, including his participation in the global summit in Geneva, Michael represented the San Francisco Hub with thoughtfulness and integrity. He engaged deeply with new perspectives while remaining grounded in his commitment to his local community, consistently reflecting on how to translate insight into meaningful impact.

He is naturally warm and generous, with a gift for bringing people together and fostering environments of openness and trust. At the same time, he pairs this with a strong sense of responsibility for the well-being of others and a thoughtful approach to systems-level change.

I have no doubt that Michael will bring this same level of care, judgment, and integrity to the San Francisco Behavioral Health Commission. I recommend him without reservation.

Please feel free to contact me at lin.shi@fulbrightmail.org or 510 304 9839 should you wish to discuss his qualifications further.

Warm regards,

Lin Shi, FSA
Community Champion, Global Shapers – U.S. West (2022–2025)
World Economic Forum Global Shapers Community

GLIDE MEMORIAL CHURCH

Min. Marvin K. White
Minister of Celebration
Glide Memorial Church
San Francisco, California

April 19, 2026

To Whom It May Concern,

It is my honor to offer this letter in strong support of Michael "Mirac" Fittro for appointment to the Behavioral Health Commission.

I write not only as a minister, but as one who has had the sacred privilege of witnessing Michael's journey over these past several years. I have seen him move from vulnerability to stability, from surviving to serving, from needing care to becoming a powerful source of care for others. That kind of journey carries its own authority. It is not abstract. It is lived. It is hard won. And it matters. Michael joined the GLIDE community while unhoused and living with substance use challenges. Here, he received critical harm reduction services and support. But what distinguishes Michael is not simply that he received help. It is that he remained in community as he grew in recovery—open, honest, grounded, and committed to others still finding their way. He did not turn away from the community that held him. He deepened his relationship to it. That tells me a great deal about his character.

Michael has demonstrated a deep and consistent commitment to vulnerable and marginalized communities. Through volunteer service and through his work at the Human Services Agency, he has helped connect people to life-saving mental health, substance use, and nutrition services, including support through GLIDE. He understands that behavioral health is not a narrow issue. It is tied to housing, hunger, trauma, dignity, belonging, and access. He knows this not only professionally, but personally. He is motivated not by prestige or profit, but by responsibility—by a desire to pay forward the gift of recovery and to help build systems that are humane, healing-centered, trauma-informed, and accessible to those who need them most.

I have also seen Michael build meaningful intergenerational relationships in community, including supporting elders in accessing essential services and companionship. He understands that healing is not only clinical. It is also relational. It is communal. It is human. The Behavioral Health Commission needs people with expertise, yes—but also people with moral clarity, compassion, and lived wisdom. Michael brings all three. He would serve with integrity, depth, and an understanding of what is truly at stake for those navigating behavioral health and substance use challenges.

I offer my wholehearted support for his appointment.

Sincerely,

Min. Marvin K. White
Minister of Celebration
GLIDE Memorial Church

NAN GROGAN ORROCK
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COMMITTEES:

Appropriations
Finance
Health and Human Services
Higher Education
Urban Affairs

The State Senate

Atlanta, Georgia 30334

April 17th, 2026

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of Michael Fittro's candidacy for an appointment to the San Francisco Behavioral Health Commission. Michael Fittro was employed, October 2021-May 2022, as my legislative aide in my Georgia State Senate office and as campaign staff in my re-election campaign. In both roles, he had regular contact with the public to provide aid, handled confidential and sensitive information, and understood and followed applicable rules, regulations, and relevant policies.

Michael's duties as an aide included but were not limited to screening and responding to emails and inquiries, preparing correspondence, monitoring Senate floor activity and media, managing my official communications including drafting press releases, statements, social media posts, and updating the official website. He performed legislative research and prepared reports and talking points regarding critical matters, worked with other community advocates and local leaders to draft legislation, provided constituent services and attended local events and meetings with me.

During his tenure as my legislative aide and campaign staff, Michael was struggling with substance use disorder while also caring full-time for his late father. Even while he was unable to perform his duties at full capacity, he had a willingness to show up and find a way to help make the lives of his community better. Eventually, he had to take time to fully focus on his well-being and recovery. While his service in my office and campaign was short, his dedication to serving the public was strong and evident. His knowledge of the legislative process, functions of our democratic institutions, and ability to connect with our community members were some of his greater assets.

Michael has remained in touch and kept me informed of his continuous sobriety and his career in public service at the San Francisco Human Services Agency, where he fights for everyday working families to have access to healthcare, food needs, and other critical services. It is important that those who seek help have an understanding civil servant with lived experience in the government. Michael has that lived experience, and the professional experience of executing the operations of the various offices he has held. Michael's combination of passion, knowledge, life and professional experiences, all will make him an asset to the Behavioral Health Commission.

Should you have any questions, please email me at Nan.Orrock@senate.ga.gov.

Sincerely,

Nan G. Orrock
Nan Grogan Orrock, Georgia Senate District 36

April 17th, 2026

To the San Francisco Board of Supervisors:

My name is Willene Howard, and I serve as a supervisor at the Medi-Cal and CalFresh offices within the San Francisco Human Services Agency. I am writing this letter in support of Michael (Mirac) Fittro's candidacy for an appointment to the San Francisco Behavioral Health Commission.

Michael has continuously demonstrated key leadership qualities during his tenure as a Senior Eligibility Worker. At the San Francisco Human Services Agency, we serve the most vulnerable members of our community. A great majority of those we serve are individuals who are unhoused, struggling with substance use disorder and behavioral health issues, and trapped in a cycle of poverty.

Michael is a highly skilled professional who excels at both crisis management and the technical administration of the Medi-Cal program. He is particularly effective at de-escalating tense situations with community members while maintaining the precision needed to process complex cases. He possesses an in-depth knowledge of provider networks, covered services, and the specific processes required to secure healthcare coverage. He ensures clients receive the maximum benefits they are eligible for by expertly managing the budgeting process and clarifying the scope of coverage to prevent complications. He maintains secure communication with vital community resources, including rehabilitation facilities and safe houses. His approach consistently leaves clients feeling seen, heard, supported, and well-informed.

As we navigate the difficult changes due to H.R.1, Michael has provided truly empathetic, compassionate care to our immigrant community, elderly, and disabled community members as they navigate these life-altering changes to the healthcare programs they are covered under and how that affects their daily lives. He brings joy to the office even when the stakes are high and goes to every length to ensure no community member is left behind.

Michael brings a special combination of lived and professional experiences, which will make him a true asset to the Behavioral Health Commission. If you have any questions or need additional information, please email me at willene.howard@sfgov.org.

Thank you,

Willene Howard

SAN FRANCISCO RISING

www.sfrising.org

4/30/26

To the San Francisco Board of Supervisors Rules Committee and whom else it may concern:

I am writing in strong support of Lisa Wynn for reappointment to the San Francisco Behavioral Health Commission.

I have known Lisa since 2024 through her work as a community leader and an organizer with San Francisco Rising. In that time I have watched her demonstrate the rare combination of lived experience, strategic thinking, and genuine community accountability that our city's most important advisory bodies need. She is consistently willing to do the hard work of community outreach, education and relationship building, and has mentored and inspired many student leaders at City College to choose a path of service and advocacy.

Lisa is a gun violence survivor who built an organization from that experience — not as a career move, but as a calling. United in Love Inc. has served Black, Brown and Pacific Islander families in Bayview-Hunters Point around issues of health and wellness for eight years because of her relentless commitment to the community that shaped her.

On the Behavioral Health Commission, Lisa has brought the voice of D10 residents into critical city policy conversations that too often happen without them. She has served as Vice Chair and Co-Chair of Implementation, developed resolutions, and shown up consistently for the community she was appointed to represent.

Please support her reappointment to the Behavioral Health Commission to continue to inform our city's health policies with the experience, knowledge and deep relationships of a community leader like Lisa Wynn.

Sincerely,

Celi Tamayo-Lee

Executive Director, San Francisco Rising