



Edwin M. Lee
Mayor
Naomi Kelly
City Administrator
Carla Johnson, CBO, CASp.
Director

March 18, 2016

London Breed
President
Board of Supervisors
City Hall
1 Dr. Carlton Goodlett Place, Room 244
San Francisco, CA 94102

File No. 150732- Mandatory Disability Access Improvements

Dear President Breed,

I am writing in support of File No. 150732, proposed legislation introduced by Supervisor Katy Tang in July 2015. This legislation is an ordinance amending the San Francisco Building Code. It would require any existing building with a place of public accommodation to have all primary entries and path of travel into the building accessible for people with disabilities, or for the owner to receive a determination of equivalent facilitation, technical infeasibility, or unreasonable hardship.

When the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) passed in 1990 it imposed obligations on public accommodations to remove the barriers to their services that were readily achievable. Twenty five years later, this broad civil rights legislation has still not been fully implemented because many of San Francisco's smaller businesses in some of our older buildings have struggled to understand or comply with the mandate. Those businesses that remain inaccessible cannot provide critical services to people with disabilities, which means the business loses valuable clients and is at risk of ADA lawsuits.

The City has made many different efforts over the last two decades to increase awareness about disability compliance. There has been outreach, education, financial assistance, and free accessibility assessments under the CASp program. Supervisor Tang made this issue one of her priorities, going back to the years when she served as an Aide to Supervisor Carmen Chu. Unfortunately, barriers remain at all too many businesses. This legislation is intended to correct that deficiency.

I wish to commend Supervisor Tang and her aide Dyanna Quizon for their efforts developing this ordinance and bringing it to the Board of Supervisors. They led a collaborative effort that included Regina Dick-Endrizzi from the Office of Small Business, Richard Halloran from the Department of Building Inspection, the Public Works Department, the Planning Department, members of the Access

Appeals Commission and many others. This legislation is thoughtful and practical and it accomplishes our shared goals to make San Francisco more accessible.

I look forward to working with the Board of Supervisors and the stakeholders, including the business community and the disability community, as we develop information and the staffing structure to support this new program.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carla Johnson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Carla Johnson, CBO, CASp
Director

cc: Members of the Board of Supervisors
Angela Calvillo, Clerk of the Board.