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To: [SFPD, Commission \(POL\)](#)
Subject: Board File # 230644 & 230645 Public Comment: Tell The Mayor and Board of Supervisors to Keep Public Safety and Correctly Prioritize Recovery in the Next Budget
Date: Friday, September 22, 2023 10:51:45 AM

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Dear Police Commission,

I'm a San Francisco resident who sees the fentanyl-fueled drug epidemic as the main issue our elected leaders need to solve. This crisis is linked to all of the problems San Francisco faces, including homelessness, mental health, public safety, and economic vitality. You must make ending open-air drug markets and funding more city-sponsored recovery programs the main priorities of this year's budget.

It's encouraging to see elected officials at the local, state, and federal level call for coordination to close drug markets in San Francisco. To ensure these calls for action are effective, there must be a senior official appointed by the Mayor who is responsible for and empowered to bring all necessary resources together to permanently disrupt drug markets. I look forward to seeing a robust strategy and plan to disrupt drug dealing in our community.

The Board of Supervisors must ensure that Mayor Breed's public safety investments remain in the final budget. The proposed budget funds our community's law enforcement requests, and I'm grateful for the Mayor's responsiveness to our community's calls for action. Funding to meet the recommended number of sworn SFPD officers, adding staffing aides to allow officers to answer high-priority calls, and investment in personnel training and narcotics equipment will make a real difference in law enforcement's efforts to close San Francisco's open-air drug markets.

The Mayor and Board of Supervisors must ensure the budget reflects an investment in closing the gaps San Francisco has for delivering true treatment on demand for recovery services. Mayor Breed's proposed budget funds a number of our community's demands, like expanding completely drug-free therapeutic teaching communities for justice involved people, expanding the capacity of the Billie Holiday Center to serve more justice involved people, funding 50 new dual diagnosis treatment beds, and making it easier for recovery service providers to offer competitive jobs.

But true treatment on demand enables people to recover from substance use disorder. This means that anyone who wants treatment gets it immediately, with no one forced to wait on the street or in jail. San Francisco needs to deliver a continuum of care, from harm reduction as the baseline to full recovery as the goal—I'm not confident that the proposed budget investments make the right choices to fully close the current gaps.

Funding must be provided to bolster intake center capacity. The current system for getting those who request treatment into recovery programs is a patchwork of hotlines and street response teams that result in people waiting for days. While it's encouraging to see that there's a new stabilization center planned for 2024, it must have enough beds and a guarantee that people can enter it once they request treatment, then efficiently directed to the appropriate in-patient treatment program. We also need more significant investments in in-patient treatment programs that have recovery as the goal.

Finally, I'm concerned that spending \$18.9 million in opioid settlement funds for three Wellness Hubs isn't the best use of this money, as Wellness Hubs are intended to provide overdose prevention, overdose reversals, and safe consumption sites. Overdose prevention and reversals are critical, but other city services already offer these more efficiently. This money should be directed to services like SoMa RISE that will help people get healthy and sheltered—sober hotels, intake centers, and more drug treatment beds.

Again, I'm grateful to Mayor London Breed for taking steps to end San Francisco's drug crisis with this proposed

budget. I know completely eradicating drug use is unrealistic. But City Hall has the opportunity to improve the lives of all San Franciscans by slowing the rate of overdoses as well as reducing the open-air drug sales and drug use that are eroding our city. Ensure this happens by fully funding these priorities in the next budget.

Sincerely,
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