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April 18, 2018

The Honorable London Breed, President
The Honorable Katy Tang, Chair, Land Use and Transportation Committee
San Francisco Board of Supervisors
San Francisco City Hall
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, #244
San Francisco, CA 94012

RE: SUPPORT: File #180323, Building Code – Mandatory Disability Access Improvements for Places of Public Accommodation– Extension of Time Deadlines **(Amendment Requested)**

Dear President Breed and Supervisor Tang,

The undersigned, representing the interests of thousands of local businesses, support Supervisor Tang's proposed ordinance (File #180323) that extends timelines in Chapter 11D of the Building Code related to Mandatory Disability Access improvements. It also eliminates the administrative fee to implement the Disability Access Improvement Program. We support a suggested amendment to the current draft regarding notice, which is described below.

Chapter 11D of the Building Code was enacted in April 2016 and became effective in May 2016. It established a timeline for owners of existing buildings with a place of public accommodation to have a building inspected for compliance with accessible entry and path of travel requirements and, if not in compliance, to either bring the building into compliance or obtain a finding from the City of equivalent facilitation, technical infeasibility, or unreasonable hardship. Extensions of time could be granted but not beyond six years from Chapter 11D's effective date. A status report on the implementation of Chapter 11D from the Department of Building Inspection (DBI) was due to the Board of Supervisors in May 2017.

Subsequent legislation extended for one year the original time for compliance with the accessible entry and path of travel requirements, the six-year limitation on extensions of time, and the DBI report deadline. This ordinance extends each of those three extended deadlines for an additional six months.

The undersigned support making the city's building stock accessible to all persons when possible, and we also believe extending timelines in order to meet the compliance deadlines is both necessary and reasonable.

San Francisco sidewalks are narrow and crowded, often lining steep hillside streets. Much of our commercial building stock is old and constructed to the property line with little or no setbacks. Neighborhood shopping areas feature many older small-scale, mixed-use buildings with narrow doorways, uneven flooring and front steps that do not comply with federal and state disability requirements.

More time is needed for property owners to bring buildings into compliance with the Mandatory Disability Access Improvement requirements. While disability access is unequivocally important, that construction is time-consuming and costly for both property and business owners. Eliminating the administrative fee will certainly help local businesses in their good-faith efforts to come into compliance with the code. Ensuring there is ample time within which to comply is also very beneficial. In this regard, we would support an amendment to the legislation that property owners must give businesses at least 30 days notice before commencing construction to come into compliance. This will help mitigate impacts on the businesses that the construction may cause.

We who represent many in the San Francisco businesses community wish to thank Supervisor Tang for introducing this legislation, and we urge the Board of Supervisors to support it.

Sincerely,



Tallia Hart
San Francisco Chamber of Commerce



Gwyneth Borden
Golden Gate Restaurant Association



Kevin Carroll
Hotel Council of San Francisco



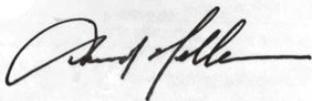
Henry Karnilowicz
San Francisco Council of District Merchant Association



John Bozeman
Business Owners and Managers
Association of San Francisco



Paul Pendergast
Golden Gate Business Association



David Heller
Greater Geary Boulevard Merchants Association



Karin Flood
Union Square Business Improvement District

cc: Clerk of the Board, to be distributed to all Supervisors; Mayor Mark Farrell; Tom Hui, Director, SF Department of Building Inspection; Regina Dick-Endrizzi, Executive Director, SF Office of Small Business