

December 2, 2020

Chair Supervisor Gordon Mar, GAO Committee
Supervisor Peskin, Member, GAO Committee
Supervisor Haney, Member, GAO Committee
San Francisco City Hall
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place,
San Francisco, CA 9410

Re: Support of the Moscone Center Civil Grand Jury Report

Dear Chair Mar,

On behalf of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, I offer our support of the findings and recommendations set forth in the Civil Grand Jury's report, "Sustain Our City's High Performing Moscone Convention Center."

The recommendations capture the primary concerns that our membership has in regards to maintaining and attracting new business to San Francisco, and the various associated challenges. Moscone Center is a lifeblood for our economy bringing in hundreds of thousands of business meeting attendees annually, supporting thousands of employees, small businesses, restaurants, hotels, and cultural institutions.

Travel and tourism have been devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Arguably, this industry has been hit hardest out of any other and will take the longest to recover. That is why the following recommendations in the above-referenced report are vital to our economic recovery:

- Supplement the current Moscone Expansion District Assessments with an additional general fund allocation of at least \$2.5M to provide rental discounts to convention center clients
- Effective for conventions after July 1, 2021, the Police Department must assign at least an additional three uniformed beat patrol officers per 10,000 expected event attendees, dedicated to patrolling areas around Moscone Center during the eight busiest convention hours
- Supporting the renewal of the Tourism Improvement District as well as establishing a multi-agency task force for event security and street management.

These recommendations need to be prioritized and implemented immediately. Pre-COVID, the City was losing business due to street conditions, street cleanliness, safety and security concerns as well as costs of doing business. In order for us to bring our number one economic driver back during this period of recovery, we must think differently and do more.

San Francisco's economy is complex and its sectors are interdependent. The unique beauty, diversity and culture of San Francisco has long attracted visitors looking for a world class place to convene. This in turn has spurred tremendous economic activity to develop around the tourism and events industry. Many community-serving small businesses that provide good jobs and make their neighborhoods vibrant rely heavily on visitors from outside the city for the bulk of their fiscal sustainability. Meetings like those hosted at Moscone center are crucial to the sustainability of thousands of SF small businesses and investment to keep the center competitive on a national and international level is critical.



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We must support the over 80,000 employees in San Francisco who are proud to call this industry their profession, many of which are still out of work and unable to support their families. We must ensure that San Francisco remains competitive as a destination so that we can continue to support the City's general fund with tax revenues that are desperately needed. And we must think creatively about how to support the backbone of our city, our small businesses, who rely on business and leisure visitors to keep the lights on.

Please support the key recommendations in this report and ensure timely implementation so that we are able to recover and thrive once again.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Rodney Fong
CEO and President
The San Francisco Chamber of Commerce