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June 22, 2018

The Honorable Malia Cohen
Chair, Budget and Finance Committee
San Francisco Board of Supervisors
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, #244
San Francisco, CA 94012

Re: Police Department Staffing Budget

Dear Supervisor Cohen:

The San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, representing the interests of thousands of local businesses, urges the Budget and Finance Committee to approve the funding request of the Police Department to increase staffing levels to meet the growing needs of the city's residents, workers and visitors.

The Charter "minimum" police staffing levels, set by voters in 1994, was fixed at a time when the city's population was approximately 724,000, 20% lower than it is today. In fact, it was based on a staffing level set by Mayor Feinstein's administration when the population was under 700,000.

With the transfer of jurisdiction for Treasurer Island and Hunter Point Shipyard to the city, the geographic area the Departments polices has expanded. Our day-time workforce population has increased from 595,000 in 1994 to over 800,000 workers today. And, while serious crimes have declined, the type of crimes that impacts residents on a daily basis have increased by an alarming rate.

There is clearly a need for increased staffing. We believe the best way to deter crime is to put officers on the beat; downtown, at transit hubs and stations and on neighborhood retail streets. At the same time, we must remain ahead of the curve with retirements and assure that response times to serious crimes in progress are met. In our growing city this can only be accomplished by adding to the Department's uniformed and civilian workforce.

The Chamber of Commerce urges the Board of Supervisors to approve Mayor Farrell's four-year plan to increase the Police Department's uniformed force by 250 officers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Lazarus", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jim Lazarus
Senior Vice President of Public Policy

Cc: Clerk of the Board, to be distributed to all Supervisors; Mayor Mark Farrell