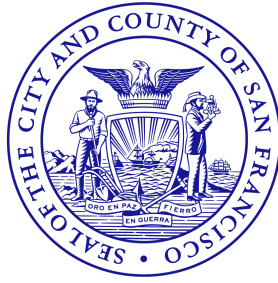


City and County
of San Francisco



Board of Supervisors
Member, District 6

MATT DORSEY

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NEWS RELEASE

Sup. Safaí's 'Cop Tax' scheme set to advance today over opposition from Mayor, co-sponsors, safety advocates

Hijacked Police Staffing Charter Amendment now requires 'a future tax measure passed by the voters' before San Franciscans can hope for progress on public safety challenges

SAN FRANCISCO (Nov. 6, 2023) — A two-member majority of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors' Rules Committee is expected to vote later this morning to advance a substantially gutted police full staffing Charter Amendment that will now make minimum SFPD staffing levels "contingent upon...a future tax measure passed by the voters."

The hostile amendment authored by Supervisor Ahsha Safaí was adopted with the support of Supervisor Shamann Walton last week, over the strong objections of its original author, Supervisor Matt Dorsey. Even if voters were to agree to a tax hike or tax modification next year, Safaí's amended version would delay for at least 18 months a meaningful role for voters to address a police understaffing crisis that an SFPD commander described to a Board committee last month as "catastrophic," given the current pace of officer retirements.

On Friday, [Mayor London Breed sent a letter](#) to Supervisor Dorsey, joining him in withdrawing her own support from the hijacked ballot measure. In it, she expressed alarm at "recent amendments to your measure that would state we should only pay for increased police staffing and recruitment if we raise taxes."

“San Francisco has a budget that has grown substantially in recent years, and we should be able to pay for basic services like police staffing within that budget,” **Mayor London Breed** wrote. “We should not require our residents and businesses to pay more taxes to provide the police officers they rightly expect to see on our streets. Providing a well-staffed police department is a basic responsibility of city government and tying the safety of our neighborhoods to tax increases is irresponsible, tone deaf, and disrespectful to our constituents. I’m glad you have removed your name from this measure, and I join you in this opposition.”

Supervisors Rafael Mandleman and Joel Engardio joined Dorsey last week in withdrawing their co-sponsorships. As of this morning, Supervisor Safaí is now the measure’s lone sponsor.

“Supervisor Safaí’s ‘cop tax’ scheme is a cynical ploy that aims to manipulate voters’ legitimate concerns about public safety into support for new taxes next year — and I think most San Franciscans will be offended by it,” said **Supervisor Matt Dorsey**. “The Charter Amendment I authored would have let San Francisco voters decide whether or not to prioritize their own existing tax dollars for a fully staffed police department. Instead, Supervisor Safaí’s poison-pill amendment now tells San Franciscans, ‘Of course you can have a fully staffed police department — but only if you pay extra.’ It would make San Francisco into the Spirit Airlines of municipal governments, and it’s absurd. It would be comical, if it weren’t so harmful to our ability to make any kind of progress to dismantle open-air drug markets, to restore and maintain public order, and to better protect public safety citywide.”

In [another letter sent last Friday](#), more than 20 organizational supporters of Dorsey’s original San Francisco Police Full Staffing Act — including the Hotel Council of San Francisco, the San Francisco Travel Association, the Golden Gate Restaurant Association and the San Francisco Benefit District Alliance — also expressed their strong opposition to Supervisor Safaí’s version, noting they “do not support this amendment which creates a false choice between police staffing and additional taxes,” adding that “Public safety is a core public service that should already be fully funded from our current general fund.”

“Although we understand the concerns in regard to the City’s projected budget shortfall, we also urge you to consider the consequences of severe police department understaffing in potential lost revenue to the City,” the organizations wrote. “Public safety perceptions are influencing decisions about whether companies want to locate here or host conferences, whether workers want to return downtown, and whether tourists will visit. Small businesses

and their employees are victims of crime and greatly impacted by public disorder. These challenges have real impacts to the City's tax revenue and overall vibrancy. We must get public safety right. Then tax revenue will follow."

The Board of Supervisors' Rules Committee meets at 10:00 a.m. this morning, in Board Chambers, in San Francisco City Hall. The complete legislative file on "Charter Amendment - Minimum Police Department Staffing and Five-Year Annual Funding Requirement," File #230985, Sponsor: Ahsha Safai," is available online at the following URL:

- <https://sfgov.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6359403&GUID=D457BC17-1B52-4148-8F44-A6A1F562A47D&Options=ID|Text|&Search=230985>

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