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08-August-2024

Supervisor XXXXX

San Francisco City Hall

1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place

Board of Supervisors, Room 224

San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

RE: Horseback Riding in San Francisco

Dear Supervisor XXXXX,

As it is the responsibility of the Commission of Animal Control and Welfare to advise the Office of the Mayor, the Board of Supervisors, and the Office of the City Administrator on animal issues, we want to share our recommendation regarding horseback riding in San Francisco.

At our August 8th meeting, the Commission voted unanimously to recommend that specific animal welfare and safety standards be implemented – and ultimately enforced - before horseback riding is allowed to resume in the City. This recommendation follows the recent closure of Chaparral Ranch, which provided horseback riding services in Golden Gate Park and at Camp Mathers.

At earlier meetings, the Commission learned about the unique needs of horses who work in urban environments. Without proper care and protocols in place, unpredictable scenarios common in urban cities can lead to danger for horses, as well as humans. The Commission also learned that, because of these challenges, no other major urban U.S. city currently offers horseback riding.

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of horses (as well as employees and patrons), the Commission is asking that horseback riding not resume unless the recommended standards from [A Guide: Minimum Standards of Horse Care in the State of California](#), published by the U.C. Davis School of Veterinary Medicine Center for Equine Health, are not only implemented, but also enforced. The guide “cites existing code and scientific and unbiased evidentiary information to establish recommended minimum care standards” across multiple areas. The U.C. Davis School of Veterinary Medicine is considered one of the top veterinary programs in the world, and the Commission



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feels confident that these recommended standards are appropriate and accurate.

If you should have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to reach out to me or any other member of the Commission. Thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

Michael Angelo Torres
Chair, San Francisco Animal Commission – Commission of Animal Control and Welfare

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CC: San Francisco Department of Recreation and Parks, Permits Division

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