

Tenderloin Business Coalition

Phone: (415) 236-3746

info@tenderloinbusinesscoalition.com

www.tenderloinbuisnesscolation.com

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Dear Supervisor Preston,

We, the Tenderloin Business Coalition, have observed your recent interactions with the Mayor and wish to set the record straight regarding your quote in the SF Chronicle on 6/13: "I don't spend as much time meeting with the business interests that have made it clear they want to arrest and incarcerate drug users in San Francisco".

Given your own personal assessment of not having spent too much time with businesses in the Tenderloin, we thought it important to speak for ourselves. The TBC has never advocated for the arrest or incarceration of drug users. The TBC's singular objective is unambiguous: To focus the attention of City leaders and resources on closing the open-air drug markets that have operated with impunity in our neighborhood for far too long. You can read the public demands we made in our petition which was signed by over 200 business operators and property owners from your district and previously submitted to your office.

In February 2023, we invited you to a meeting to discuss our concerns as business and property owners in your district. We shared with you our view that appropriate, measured and compassionate law enforcement with alternative interventions is an important part of the strategy. You dismissed this view outright, and did nothing to pursue a common understanding. We asked you for alternative strategies and you provided none. Your job as Supervisor is to respond to the stated needs of your constituency and enact effective policy in support of those needs. On the contrary, you seem only to be interested in action that promotes your own personal ideology and that is most certainly not the function of your elected office.

Since you made it very clear that you would not support us, we have focused our time and energy on working with Mayor Breed, SFPD, City agencies and sympathetic supervisors of other districts. We convene meetings to understand and inform their strategies and hold them to their commitments. We encouraged Mayor Breed to ask for State and Federal assistance and helped to make that an effective ask. We have collectively made incremental progress towards our single pointed objective of removing the drug markets from our sidewalks and store fronts. We have achieved some positive results but we have a long, long way to go.

We would make even more progress if we all work together. We would welcome the voice of our Supervisor to our work pressing and holding accountable the Mayor, the police and other City, state and federal agencies in pursuit of a comprehensive and lasting solution. Working with us more closely would have the added benefit of learning more about how the business and property owners in your district actually feel so you don't publicly misrepresent our position again in the future.

Please work with us, not against us. The solutions to problems of this complexity are incredibly difficult to find and it's going to take all of us working together for us to achieve success.

-The Tenderloin Business Coalition