

Youth Commission
City Hall ~ Room 345
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102-4532



(415) 554-6446
(415) 554-6140 FAX
www.sfgov.org/youth_commission

YOUTH COMMISSION
MEMORANDUM

TO: John Carroll, Clerk, Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee
FROM: Youth Commission
DATE: Wednesday, May 8, 2019
RE: Referral response to BOS File No. 190392 – [Administrative Code - Juvenile Hall Closure]

At our **Monday, May 6, 2019, meeting**, the Youth Commission voted unanimously to support the following motion:

To support BOS File No. 190392 – [Administrative Code - Juvenile Hall Closure]

Comments/Recommendations:

The Youth Commission voted to approve the attached letter of support from the Youth Commission’s Transformative Justice Committee.

Youth Commissioners thank the Board of Supervisors for their attention to this issue. If you have any questions, please contact our office at (415) 554-6446, or your Youth Commissioner.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bahlam Vigil".

Bahlam Vigil, Chair
Adopted on May 6, 2019
2018-2019 San Francisco Youth Commission

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April 9th, 2019
Board of Supervisors
City and County of San Francisco
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

RE: Strong Support for BOS File No. 190392 [Administrative Code - Juvenile Hall Closure]
Sponsors: Walton; Ronen, Haney, Mar, Peskin, Fewer, Brown and Safai

Dear Board of Supervisors,

San Francisco Juvenile Hall is under-filled, overfunded, and not a restorative space for our youth. Over the last decade, youth crime has steadily decreased, reaching record lows across the country, including in San Francisco. Currently, over 70 percent of San Francisco's Juvenile Hall sits empty, with the city spending nearly \$270,000 to keep one young person behind bars each year. In January, for example, there were 45 children detained in the Hall, filling only 30 percent of its 150 beds, with nearly 70 percent of those detained being held for a non-violent offense. The city's approach also disproportionately affects African American youth, despite the fact that African Americans make up a dwindling 3% percentage of San Francisco's population.

For many years, the Youth Commission has advocated expanding alternative to incarceration for youth through legislation and our annual Budget and Policy Priorities publications. Our city's budget would be much better used for investment in alternatives to incarceration, like community-based restorative practices. We advocated for these in our recent Omnibus Budget Priorities Resolution. Through these, youth would be able to heal, learn and grow while staying rooted with their community.

Legislation introduced at the San Francisco Board of Supervisors April 9th meeting would require the closure of San Francisco's Juvenile Hall by December 2021. In its place, San Francisco would develop an expanded array of alternatives to incarceration for young people who do not need to be locked up. In addition to expanding community-based alternatives to detention and providing a rehabilitative, non-institutional place of detention, it will establish a working group for the closure plan, and establish a Youth Justice Reinvestment Fund.

We, the Transformative Justice Committee of the Youth Commission, believe that incarceration leaves youth traumatized, disconnected and disempowered. We follow the lead of youth directly impacted by the legal system and thank Young Women Freedom Center and Supervisors Walton, Haney, and Ronen for spearheading this legislation forward. We are excited that the legislation is veto-proof with the cosponsorship of Supervisors Mar, Brown, Lee Fewer, and Peskin. Let's shut down Juvenile Hall and open the doors for community-oriented solutions to community health issues. It's high time to focus on care not cages for young people.

Sincerely,

Transformative Justice Committee
San Francisco Youth Commission

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Bahlam Vigil".

Bahlam Vigil, Chair,
2018-19 Youth Commission
Adopted on May 6, 2019