



NORMAN YEE

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**Supervisor Norman Yee's Official Statement on
Board of Supervisors' Police Staffing Resolution**

On Tuesday, the Board of Supervisors took a vote on a non-binding resolution to establish a Board policy to support increasing the number police officers in San Francisco based on population growth. We have heard from many District 7 residents who were perplexed by my decision to oppose this resolution. Since the media did not cover my perspective, I want to take this opportunity to explain my position.

Since coming into office, I have urged the City to increase the number of police officers to the level that our current Charter supports, which is 1,971. The San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) currently has 1,689 full-duty officers, so we are roughly 300 officers short of meeting the 1,971 goal. Just a few years ago, SFPD had a hiring freeze due to the economic recession and struggled to increase its force. That was unacceptable to me. This year, I supported a City budget which allowed SFPD to add 8 police academy classes over the next two years to train new officers. Police Chief Greg Suhr believes that our city will reach 1,971 police officers by 2017 with this increase in classes.

The resolution introduced by my colleagues did not simply state that we wanted to increase the number of officers to meet our current needs. I would have supported that. Instead, the resolution called for increasing our police force beyond 2,200 officers. The 2,200 figure is based on an old report completed in 2008. The sponsors of the resolution did not even bother to have a discussion with the San Francisco Police Commission, the oversight body of the SF Police Department, about this goal. I have an issue with supporting a policy statement that does not offer an open, transparent dialogue about the real needs to support an increase. I also don't believe in making decisions based on outdated data. Since 2008, there have been many changes that influence the assessment of the appropriate number of police officers needed to keep our city safe. This includes new technology that we are investing in to increase SFPD's ability to decrease response time. Can there be other changes to make SFPD more efficient? Can we move police officers out of desk jobs and on to the beat instead? Are there effective crime prevention programs that would influence the number of officers needed to ensure public safety?

I also want to point out that this resolution is not impactful. It is merely a statement--not a mandate or an action. If we really want to talk about increasing public safety, we should be looking at proactive ways to determine the needs of our city. We have at least two years before the SFPD can even reach the 1,971 goal established by our Charter. I want us to get to a point where we are able to make the call to increase the number of officers based on a comprehensive process. I wanted to offer an amendment to this

Member, Board of Supervisors
District 7



City and County of San Francisco

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resolution to include a process to determine how many police officers are needed in the City based on **current analysis**. I wanted to take the politics out of this vote.

I completely support our police force and look forward to getting our District 7 stations fully staffed to serve our residents. But, as we plan for the future, I want to continue this conversation and approach the question of appropriate staffing for all our Public Safety departments in a comprehensive way.

I hope this helps to clarify my position on this resolution. Let's make sound, logical decisions rather than political ones. It's only fair to the residents of our District and this great city that we take the time to do it right.