

City and County of
San Francisco



Board of Supervisors,
President

AARON PESKIN
市參事 佩斯金

For Immediate Release
June 12, 2024

Contact: Sunny Angulo
415.554.7451

Supervisor Aaron Peskin Moves Emergency Controls to Protect Essential Queer Health Services in Castro

As Castro prepares for PRIDE, healthcare center Queer LifeSpace faces eviction

San Francisco – LGBTQ mental healthcare facility, Queer LifeSpace (QLS), recently announced it was being threatened with potential eviction from its Castro neighborhood home of 13 years. The announcement comes as the City prepares to welcome hundreds of thousands of LGBTQ visitors to the Castro for PRIDE month.

This week, Board of Supervisors President Aaron Peskin introduced legislation creating land use controls that would protect the critical health services use of the center – similar to those he used to save the Punch Line Comedy Club from being converted by Google in 2019. The legislation would prevent a change of use at the property in the Castro and Upper Market commercial districts without Planning Commission approval to anything outside of health or social services for at least 18 months, with an option to become permanent.

“Queer LifeSpace is providing essential health services that the queer community needs now more than ever - it’s a safe place in uncertain times,” said **Board of Supervisors President Aaron Peskin**. “In this moment when commercial corridors are struggling to rebound from the pandemic, landlords should be embracing long-term small businesses that add community value, jobs, services, and neighborhood stability.”

Founded in 2011, non-profit counseling agency, Queer LifeSpace, provides sliding-scale evidence-based mental health and substance abuse services to the LGBTQ community, as well as provides training for therapists to become LGBTQ competent. Currently the health center supports nine first-time clinical trainees and five mental health associates.

“We provide essential services to some of the Bay Area’s most marginalized communities,” said **Queer LifeSpace Executive Director, Ryan MacCarrigan**. “People come from all over the Bay Area to the Castro seeking culturally-competent, high-quality, and affordable health care in a safe space. The pandemic combined with the rise of extremist right-wing groups and policies nationwide have had a profound impact on the queer community. We can’t afford to lose another queer space in the Castro or in San Francisco.”

**City and County of
San Francisco**



**Board of Supervisors,
President**

AARON PESKIN
市參事 佩斯金

In addition to being located within the Castro Street Neighborhood Commercial District and Upper Market Street Neighborhood Commercial Transit District, Queer LifeSpace is also located in the heart of the Castro LGBTQ Cultural District, one of ten cultural districts throughout the city created to celebrate, empower, and preserve marginalized communities through place-making and anti-displacement efforts.

“This is an example of how landlords abuse their power by prioritizing a bottom-line of profits over community and common sense, and we support Queer LifeSpace and President Peskin’s legislation to save it,” said **Tina Aguirre, Cultural District Director of the Castro LGBTQ Cultural District**. “Queer and trans people experience high levels of trauma because of homophobia and transphobia in family and institutional settings. Our hope is that Queer LifeSpace is protected and able to continue to provide the great services they provide in the Castro.”

The legislation will be scheduled for a vote next month.

###