

March 17, 2014

Land Use and Economic Development Committee
San Francisco Board of Supervisors
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
City Hall, Room 244
San Francisco, CA 94102

RE: **In-Law Legalization Legislation**

Dear Members of the Land Use and Economic Development Committee,

SPUR thanks the Land Use and Economic Development Committee of the Board of Supervisors for the opportunity to comment on Supervisor Chiu's proposal to provide a pathway to legalize existing illegal in-law units.

SPUR supports Supervisor Chiu's proposed ordinance to permit the legalization of units constructed without required permits. The proposed legislation establishes a legalization process and allows some Planning Code requirements to be relaxed without taking risks in the area of health and life safety.

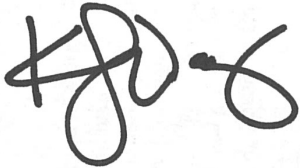
SPUR has long advocated for in-law units as an efficient and sensitive way to increase density in San Francisco while respecting neighborhood character (see SPUR's 2006 report, *Secondary Units*). In-law units typically have little visual impact, are distributed throughout the community, are cheaper to build, and provide a range of housing opportunities that meet a variety of needs in the community.

The units affected by this legislation will have no net impact on their neighborhoods since they already exist and are currently housing individuals and families. Anecdotal estimates put the number of these illegal units at 30,000 to 50,000 across the city. While this proposed legislation will not increase San Francisco's housing supply, **legalizing the units will maintain an existing source of affordable housing, ameliorate health and life safety hazards, and increase property tax revenue to the city.** The legislation benefits all parties: it provides a safe and clear path to legal status for property owners, it includes protections for tenants, it does not have a sudden impact on neighborhoods, and it fulfills city goals of providing safe and affordable housing to a broad range of the population.

We also understand that Supervisor Chiu's office is coordinating with Planning staff on suggested revisions and support that process.

Thank you for considering our recommendation. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 415-644-4884.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KWang', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kristy Wang
Community Planning Policy Director

Cc: SPUR Board of Directors