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*****PRESS RELEASE: SUPERVISOR WALTON INTRODUCES CHARTER
AMENDMENT TO ELECT THE DIRECTOR OF DEPARTMENT OF POLICE
ACCOUNTABILITY*****

SAN FRANCISCO, CA – Today, Supervisor Shamann Walton, along with Supervisors Ahsha Safai, Hillary Ronen, and Dean Preston, introduced a Charter Amendment to elect the Director for the Department of Police Accountability for the November 2024 General Election.

This Charter Amendment will help establish mechanisms that ensure accountability and build trust between law enforcement and the public in San Francisco by electing the Director for the Department of Police Accountability. Independent oversight helps to bridge the gap between law enforcement agencies and the communities that they serve will improve public safety in the long run.

San Francisco has not been immune to instances of police misconduct and brutality that challenge the very principles of justice, equality, and community. From the tragic deaths of Mario Woods, Alex Nieto, Kenneth Harding Jr., and Luis Gongora Pat, to the national tragedies of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Freddie Gray, and countless others, these incidents serve as stark reminders of the urgent need for reform.

A study conducted by UCSF in 2022 and reported by the [San Francisco Chronicle](#), revealed a disturbing link between racial segregation and the heightened threat of police violence against Black residents. Despite being one of the most progressive cities, San Francisco had the highest rate of injury by law enforcement for Black residents out of the 52 California counties included in the study. Black residents account for less than 5% of the city's population.

“We should not have to prioritize accountability and transparency only when—or until the next tragic incident occurs,” said Supervisor Shamann Walton. “As a city committed to justice, accountability, and safety, we must confront these realities head-on. Implementing robust



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oversight measures, such as electing an impartial Director for Police Accountability, empowers independent bodies to thoroughly investigate allegations of misconduct and builds public trust. Together, we can strive to build a city where every resident feels safe, respected, and protected under the law.”

It is crucial that independent bodies, like the Department of Police Accountability, maintain absolute impartiality, free from the sway of internal politics or biases within law enforcement agencies. The director's position must be elected because public trust in law enforcement hinges on witnessing allegations of misconduct being investigated by impartial entities, unbound by departmental affiliations or personal interests. This ensures the cultivation of trust in law enforcement agencies and benefits every resident of San Francisco.

If approved by voters in November, this Charter Amendment will be a first of its kind to elect the director for the Department of Police Accountability, which will mark a pivotal step toward a more just and equitable San Francisco. The first election for the Director of the Department of Police Accountability will be held in the general election of 2026 for a two-year term, followed by subsequent elections in presidential years for a four-year term.

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