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October 7, 2013

Members of the Board of Supervisors  
City Hall  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, Ca 94102-4689

**Re: Letter of Support for Park Hours Legislation**

Dear Supervisor:

I am writing to ask for your support for the proposed Park Hours legislation, which would amend the city's Park Code to close the city's parks between 12:00 am and 5:00 am, with certain exceptions.

As a parks advocacy organization, the San Francisco Parks Alliance (SFPA) is deeply concerned about safety issues in our parks. We are constantly approached by neighborhood groups asking us to help them lobby for cameras, increased park patrol, security and flood lighting, as well as other safety measures in their parks. My organization supports this legislation because it will play a vital role in decreasing the amount of vandalism and illegal dumping that occurs in our city's parks. Currently, half of the maintenance work orders for the Recreation and Parks Department (RPD) relate to vandalism, most of which occurs between 12:00am to 5:00am.

Furthermore, this legislation will help save the city nearly \$1 million that it currently spends annually to address late night vandalism and dumping in our parks. Our parks have historically been underfunded and we know the money that the Recreation and Parks Department (RPD) is using to address late night vandalism should be used for more pressing maintenance issues, such as playground repairs - according to RPD estimates, \$1 million could fund 10 more gardeners, or 13 more afterschool sites.

San Francisco is the 14<sup>th</sup> largest city in the country and yet it is the only major city without uniform park hours. Cities both larger and smaller have set reasonable park hours (New York: 6 a.m. to 1 a.m.; Seattle: 4:30 a.m. to 11 p.m.; Austin, TX: 5 a.m. to 10 p.m.). What's more, over the years individual parks in San Francisco have been assigned conflicting and confusing operating hours - rendering posted closures all but unenforceable.

Supervisor, I am concerned that this legislation is being perceived by some as an anti-homeless; Section 3.13 of the Parks Code already addresses illegal camping/sleeping in the parks. Homeless residents have also been victims of serious attacks while they sleep in parks late at night. Limited overnight park closures will enhance everyone's safety and provide police and park patrols with an additional tool to deter vandalism in parks. I urge you to help us carry this reasonable, commonsense legislation forward and to help us create safer parks for all San Franciscans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matt O'Grady".

Matt O'Grady  
Executive Director