



Greater West Portal Neighborhood Association

December 12, 2007

Mayor Gavin Newsom
Board of Supervisors:
Aaron Peskin
Bevan Dufty
Chris Daly
Carmen Chu
Michela Alioto-Pier
Gerardo Sandoval
Jake McGoldrick
Ross Mirkarimi
Sophie Maxwell
Tom Ammiano
Sean Elsbernd

The Greater West Portal Neighborhood Association was concerned about the care of the mentally ill in our city upon learning of the proposed closure of 22 psychiatric beds at San Francisco General Hospital (SFGH) after January 1, 2008.

Our members laud the Board of Supervisors for restoring funding through July 2008, but are concerned about the future provision of care for this very vulnerable population of mentally ill. Our members are also concerned about community safety if mentally ill individuals do not receive adequate professional care, supervision, and monitoring.

We understood that the psychiatric ward of 22 beds was to be replaced by a facility operated by a private non-profit provider, and this alternative plan would not have been in place by January 1, 2008. Furthermore, this program would have been available only 16 hours a day, and would have lacked the medical support that SFGH provides.

With the necessity of cuts in the 2008-2009 budget, GWPNA members urge that, in working on the 2008-2009 budget, you carefully consider the crucial need for adequate care of the mentally ill in our city.

Sincerely yours,

D. Bruce Engle, President

CC: Mitchell Katz, Director of Public Health