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September 12, 2025

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Senate Bill 456 (Ashby): Community Beautification Act – REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Newsom,

Larry Klein
Mayor

Linda Sell
Vice Mayor

Alysa Cisneros
Councilmember

Richard Mehlinger
Councilmember

Murali Srinivasan
Councilmember

Charlsie Chang
Councilmember

Eileen Le
Councilmember

The City of Sunnyvale requests you sign SB 456 into law. This bill would exempt muralists from having to obtain a contractor's license through the California State Licensing Board (CSLB) before being commissioned for public and private art projects.

The City of Sunnyvale recognizes that public art and murals are proven drivers of community and economic health, attracting tourists, supporting jobs, generating revenue, and improving public safety and well-being. Sunnyvale has long been an artistic haven. Our city boasts some 200 Public Art pieces throughout the city. So integral is art to our city that the entire collection is now viewable online as part of the national Public Art Archive. As such, we have enshrined the protection of art and artists into city ordinance. Policy 6.4.4 Art in Public Places and section CC-1.8 of our General Plan provide and encourage the incorporation of art, both functional and decorative, in public and private development.

However, in 2023, public notices began being issued to municipalities indicating that muralists fall within the definition of a "contractor" under Business and Professions Code section 7026. As a result, muralists must carry a contractor's license if they undertake a mural on a building for more than \$500. Additionally, per Business and Professions Code section 7028.15 (e), city staff may be fined for knowingly hiring an unlicensed muralist. Due to these licensure requirements, cities across California have had to cease or stall the implementation of mural projects. To qualify for these commercial licenses, muralists must accumulate four years of specialized experience under a licensed contractor, pass the Law and Business examination, and pay annual licensing fees. These requirements

create unnecessary barriers to work on public art projects and expose city employees and artists to fines if such requirements are not met.

Muralists provide a fundamentally different service than a painting contractor, as their work is an artistic expression rather than addressing the structural integrity of a building. It is appropriate to provide a narrow exception to the state's licensing requirements for muralists, as SB 456 seeks to provide them with the flexibility to continue their artistic expression and ensure that cities like Sunnyvale can continue to be a destination for artists and art lovers alike.

For these reasons, we support SB 456 and request that it be signed into law. Please do not hesitate to contact me or Michelle Perera, Director of Library and Recreation Services, at mperera@sunnyvale.ca.gov, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Larry Klein
Mayor

cc: Senator Dr. Aisha Wahab
Assembly Member Patrick Ahrens
Senator Angelique Ashby
City Council
Tim Kirby, City Manager
Sarah Johnson-Rios, Assistant City Manager
Michelle Perera, Director of Library and Recreation Services