

To Whom It May Concern

I am writing this letter to show my support for the landmarking of the Gilbert Baker Rainbow Flag installation at Harvey Milk Plaza in San Francisco, California. The Rainbow that flies there has become a beacon of pride and self-empowerment — for both the residents of San Francisco and for visitors from around the world.

Gilbert Baker's Rainbow Flag at Harvey Milk Plaza deserves recognition as a historically significant art installation. Baker is recognized as an important political artist. His six-color Rainbow Flag is in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, the London Design Museum, the Tang Museum, the Barack Obama Presidential Library in Chicago, The Philadelphia Art Museum and many more esteemed institutions.

Gilbert Baker's installation was part of a series of his monumental artworks. The mile-long Rainbow Flag from 1994 commemorated New York City's 25th anniversary of the Stonewall riots. The Key West flag honored the original flag's 25th anniversary. (Measuring 1.25 miles, it set a world's record.)

But these iconic installations were temporary. The Rainbow Flag at Harvey Milk Plaza remains Baker's sole permanent installation. Baker made deliberate choices about its placement, height and location, to guarantee visibility from around the city. This Rainbow Flag firmly holds a place in LGBTQ+ history. To alter this work in any way would defy the artist's original intentions.

The timing for landmarking by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and the Mayor is crucial. The LGBTQ+ community is under attack. Conservatives threaten trans rights and LGBTQ+ books and curricula. More than 40 towns and school districts now ban the Rainbow Flag.

It is critical that San Francisco, the birthplace of the Rainbow Flag, preserve this important work of art. Ensure that this beacon of liberation flies, at full mast, 365 days a year, in support of sexual and gender minorities. When they erase our flag, they erase us all. Landmark this flag.

Thank you