



September 27, 2018

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Mr. Dominic Fracassa  
The San Francisco Chronicle  
901 Mission Street  
San Francisco, California 94103

Dear Mr. Fracassa,

I write to you as President of the statewide association of building departments – California Building Officials (CALBO). Founded in 1962, our mission is to promote public health and safety in building construction through responsible legislation, education and building code development.

I read your article “*SF sues former building official for cheating on construction code rules*” of September 20, 2018 with interest. Central to the article, Mr. Rodrigo Santos is named within the suit and is correctly identified as a former member of the Building Inspection Commission. Important to our profession and for clarification purposes, a member of the Building Inspection Commission, though a local government official in the broader sense, is *not* the Building Official for the City and County of San Francisco.

By way of background, Building Officials are defined in the California Health and Safety Code, Section 18949.27 as the individual invested with the responsibility for overseeing local code enforcement activities, including administration of the building department, interpretation of code requirements, and direction of the code adoption process. Personally and professionally, I believe it is important to draw a distinction between a policy body and the position legally vested with the responsibility to administer the safe construction of the built environment. A similar distinction can be made between a police or fire chief and the City Council of the city they serve.

As an organization, CALBO wanted to bring this clarification and definition to your attention given the gravity and seriousness of such matters. These instances do require investigation, but it is important to our community to know who and what position was being investigated – Building Inspector Commissioner, not the Building Official as claimed within your article.

As appropriate, we would appreciate a published clarification of the article title and applicable professional positions. We appreciate your consideration of our request.

Best regards,

**JEFF JANES, CBO**  
President