

1 [Resolution exploring instituting voter preregistration system for high school students.]

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3 **Resolution calling for the City and County of San Francisco, in conjunction with the**  
4 **San Francisco Unified School District, to investigate the logistics, both administrative**  
5 **and legal, of establishing for the preregistration of high school students to vote in an**  
6 **effort to create universal voter registration.**

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8 WHEREAS, our city and country's strength flows from its willingness to innovate and  
9 improve upon the American experiment in democracy; and,

10 WHEREAS, recent elections underscore the importance of revamping the way we  
11 register citizens to vote; and,

12 WHEREAS, huge numbers of Americans, approximately 60 million eligible adults,  
13 remained unregistered to vote, a lower percentage than in Iraq; and,

14 WHEREAS, young adults are disproportionately among the 60 million unregistered  
15 eligible voters; and,

16 WHEREAS, in San Francisco, like the rest of the United States, too many eligible adult  
17 voters and too many eligible young adults are unregistered; and,

18 WHEREAS, universal voter registration is good public policy because it establishes  
19 clean and complete voter rolls that preserve the integrity of our elections; and,

20 WHEREAS, universal voter registration, a practice used in most democratic nations,  
21 establishes a goal of 100 percent voter registration by making registration a mutual  
22 responsibility of citizens and their government; and,

23 WHEREAS, the United States is one of the few democracies where the government  
24 does not take responsibility for registering its voters; and,

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1           WHEREAS, the international norm is an orderly process of automatic voter registration  
2 of every citizen who reaches voting age, with the government taking a proactive, ongoing role,  
3 and registration occurring on a steady, rolling basis, instead of in spurts tied to any specific  
4 election; and,

5           WHEREAS, universal voter registration leads to much cleaner voter rolls and less voter  
6 fraud because with comprehensive databases and full registration there is no longer a  
7 question about who is or is not registered, since everyone is registered; and,

8           WHEREAS, San Francisco and United States needs a comprehensive, coherent  
9 system that ensures all of us can vote, but none of us can vote more than once; and,

10          WHEREAS, San Francisco can take a major step toward universal voter registration by  
11 proactively canvassing the city to register voters; and,

12          WHEREAS, San Francisco should have high schools pre-register to vote all their  
13 students as they enter their junior year, so that once these pre-registrants turn 18, their  
14 registrations automatically would become active; and,

15          WHEREAS, upon turning 18, these pre-registrants would receive a letter alerting them  
16 about their eligibility to vote, the date of the next election and their responsibilities when  
17 changing addresses; and,

18          WHEREAS, this policy would register far more young people in an orderly way and  
19 generate more understanding of the value of 100 percent registration; and,

20          WHEREAS, it would provide a means to introduce more young people to the  
21 importance of civic engagement, with a natural complement to this policy being a "voter's ed"  
22 curriculum for high school students, just as many have "driver's ed" now; and,

23          WHEREAS, over time, as all 18-year-olds were registered to vote, San Francisco  
24 would move far closer to 100 percent voter registration, Therefore be it  
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1 RESOLVED, that the City and County of San Francisco, in conjunction with the San  
2 Francisco Unified School District, should begin investigation into the logistics, both legal and  
3 administrative, of establishing for the preregistration of high school students to vote in an  
4 effort to create universal voter registration.

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