

1 [Death Toll of 1906 Earthquake Victims]

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3 **Resolution setting aside the current death toll of 478 victims of the 1906 earthquake**  
4 **and amending that number no later than April 18, 2006.**

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6 WHEREAS, On April 18, 1906, the great earthquake, one of the biggest disasters in  
7 American history, shook San Francisco; and

8 WHEREAS, In 1907, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors established a death toll  
9 for the earthquake and subsequent fire at 478, which has stood as the official toll for nearly a  
10 century; and,

11 WHEREAS, The number of deaths has been disputed by historians since they have  
12 discovered that few if any of the dead in Chinatown were counted and none of the victims  
13 who were shot by authorities as suspected looters, a figure that will run in the hundreds, has  
14 been counted; and,

15 WHEREAS, Gladys Hansen, the founder of the City Archives at the Public Library, has  
16 begun to count the dead and she has tallied more than 3,400 fatalities; and,

17 WHEREAS, Establishing an accurate death toll will properly memorialize those who  
18 perished and reflect the magnitude of the catastrophe; now, therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors set aside the death toll of 478; and, be it

20 FURTHER RESOLVED, That interested members of the public use the resources of  
21 the San Francisco History Center of the Public Library, as well as other local history  
22 repositories, to establish a certified death count, with the names of all the victims; and, be it

23 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the certified death count and list of names be presented  
24 to the Board of Supervisors for a vote on amending the toll, when the work is completed, in

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1 any event, no later than 30 days before the Centennial of the great earthquake on April 18,  
2 2006.

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