

1 [Condemning the United States Department of Agriculture’s Proposed Rule Change that
2 Threatens Food Security]

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3 **Resolution condemning a proposed rule change by the United States Department of**
4 **Agriculture (USDA) that would end categorical eligibility for Supplemental Nutrition**
5 **Assistance Program benefits and cause more than 3,000,000 people nationwide to be**
6 **more food insecure; urging the USDA to withdraw said rule change; and asking the**
7 **Human Services Agency to explain the negative effects such a change will cause.**

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9 WHEREAS, Food insecurity is a significant and growing concern in San Francisco
10 County; and

11 WHEREAS, The Board of Supervisors have declared food as a basic human right and
12 resolved to end hunger in the city by 2020; and

13 WHEREAS, The San Francisco Food Security Task Force reports in 2018 that 226,520
14 people were residents with income below 200% of the federal poverty level that are high-risk
15 of food insecurity; and

16 WHEREAS, Food insecurity results in poorer physical, mental, and emotional health
17 outcomes for children which follow them into adulthood and manifests in chronic health
18 conditions; and

19 WHEREAS, The federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), is
20 administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), provides food-
21 purchasing assistance for low- and no-income individuals and families through state operated
22 agencies and administered through county operated agencies; and

23 WHEREAS, SNAP is known and operated as CalFresh in California, which provided
24 nutritional benefits to approximately 3,938,253 or about 10% of Californians through county
25 agencies; and

1 WHEREAS, The Department of Human Services is the county agency for the
2 administration of public social services, including CalFresh, which served 59,410 or about
3 6.7% of San Francisco residents as of July 2019; and

4 WHEREAS, CalFresh and other nutrition supplement benefits are instrumental in
5 decreasing poverty and unemployment, and thereby contributing to increased economic
6 stability and mental, physical, and emotional health of families; and

7 WHEREAS, The Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 established current regulations and
8 protocol for the administration of SNAP, as well as the authority for the Secretary of the
9 Department of Agriculture to determine standards by which the Secretary will judge eligibility
10 for SNAP; and

11 WHEREAS, Judgement on eligibility changes that result in policy changes that reduce
12 or discourage eligibility for CalFresh or any social benefit program results in increased hunger,
13 illness, social instability, and crime; and

14 WHEREAS, On July 24, 2019, the United States Department of Agriculture proposed
15 new rules for SNAP, declaring that current eligibility screening was not robust and did not
16 move families toward self-sufficiency; and

17 WHEREAS, The proposed rule change would significantly reduce or current definitions
18 of categorical eligibility, where qualification for certain state programs would result in
19 automatic qualification for SNAP; and

20 WHEREAS, Economic realities in California and other states require states to deem
21 individuals and families in need “categorically eligible” for assistance programs in order to
22 meet nutrition needs given the higher costs of living and the federal government’s inadequate
23 measurement of poverty; and

1 WHEREAS, The rule change would result in more than 3,000,000 people and families
2 losing their food supplement, increasing hunger, stress, and all other negative effects of food
3 insecurity; and

4 RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco condemns the rule change
5 proposed by the United States Department of Agriculture; and, be it

6 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco urges the United
7 States Department of Agriculture to rethink and cancel the enactment of said rule change;
8 and, be it

9 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco reaffirms its
10 commitment to food security as a human right; and, be it

11 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco condemns all
12 policy changes that make it harder for people to feed their families; and, be it

13 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco will continue to
14 work toward food security despite the federal government's decision to do otherwise; and, be
15 it

16 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco urges the Director
17 of the Human Services Agency to submit a comprehensive comment to the United States
18 Department of Agriculture and the community describing the effects of the rule change on the
19 food security efforts; and, be it

20 FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution be sent to the Director of the
21 Human Services Agency, Federal Representatives in San Francisco, United States Secretary
22 of Agriculture, and to the United States Department of Agriculture.

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