

1 [Condemning Attacks on North Beach Art Galleries.]

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3 **Resolution condemning recent attacks on North Beach art galleries and urging the San**
4 **Francisco Police Department and District Attorney’s Office to cooperate and**
5 **collaborate in ensuring the free speech rights of San Francisco’s arts community.**
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7 WHEREAS, to quote Albert Camus, “Without freedom, no art; art lives only on the
8 restraints it imposes on itself, and dies of all others”; and,

9 WHEREAS, Since the 1950’s, San Francisco’s North Beach community has been a
10 haven for artists of all stripes, attracted to the neighborhood by low rents and a European
11 atmosphere featuring coffee shops and bars like Vesuvio’s and Café Trieste; and,

12 WHEREAS, Since the Beat era, North Beach has been home to many artistic icons
13 such as Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, William S. Burroughs, Peter Macchiarini, Jack
14 Micheline and Lawrence Ferlinghetti; and,

15 WHEREAS, A creative cultural environment is essential to the well being of San
16 Francisco and its residents; and,

17 WHEREAS, On May 18th, in response to a gallery exhibition depicting provocative
18 scenes recreating Iraqi prisoner abuse, a North Beach art gallery and its owner were allegedly
19 subjected to verbal threats, vandalism, property damage and physical violence by unknown
20 perpetrators; and,

21 WHEREAS, On June 1st, a meeting of concerned residents, artists and business
22 owners was convened at the Live Worms Gallery in North Beach to respond to this situation;
23 and,

24 WHEREAS, The Live Worms Gallery also became the subject of further threats of
25 violence and intimidation; and,

1 WHEREAS, It is imperative that the City and County of San Francisco make clear to
2 the resident arts community and its detractors that our City is a safe environment for the free
3 and open expression of ideas and speech; and,

4 WHEREAS, It is vital to reaffirm our commitment to protecting free speech and actively
5 pursuing elements in our community that would serve to stifle, intimidate, suppress or
6 denigrate the rights of individuals to express their political beliefs; now, therefore, be it,

7 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City of San Francisco hereby
8 condemns cowardly attacks on artists and gallery owners aimed at intimidating and censoring
9 politically controversial works of art and expression; and, be it

10 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board calls on the San Francisco Police Department
11 and the Office of District Attorney to cooperate with community leaders, gallery owners, and
12 members of the artistic community in San Francisco to ensure a safe environment for free
13 expression and speech.