

1 [Commending Tibetan Freedom Torch and Global Human Rights Torch Relay]

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3 **Resolution commending the Tibetan Freedom Torch and the Global Human Rights**
4 **Torch Relay and in their efforts to raise awareness regarding human rights violations**
5 **in China and urging the San Francisco City Representatives accepting the Beijing 2008**
6 **Olympic Torch to welcome the Torch in the explicit spirit of Olympism, consistent with**
7 **the United Nations Charter established in this City, and the United Nations Universal**
8 **Declaration of Human Rights.**

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10 WHEREAS, The Global Human Rights Torch Relay, Tibetan Freedom Torch, and the
11 Beijing 2008 Torch Relay will all make stops in San Francisco in 2008; and,

12 WHEREAS, Peoples from all lands, including China, have come to the United
13 States of America and passed through or settled in the of San Francisco seeking a better life,
14 including religious and other fundamental human freedoms; and,

15 WHEREAS, The Charter of the United Nations was signed in the City and
16 County of San Francisco in the War Memorial Opera House on June 26, 1945; and,

17 WHEREAS, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United
18 Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1947, recognizes the inherent dignity and the
19 equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family as the foundation of freedom,
20 justice and peace in the world; and,

21 WHEREAS, The People's Republic of China, as a United Nations Member State
22 since October 25, 1971, is pledged to uphold the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and
23 therein to achieve the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and
24 fundamental freedoms; and,

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1 WHEREAS, The Olympic Charter sets forth the conditions for the celebration of the
2 Olympic Games and codifies the fundamental principles of Olympism, the goal of which is to
3 place sport at the service of the harmonious development of humankind, with a view to
4 promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity; and,

5 WHEREAS, The support of the international community for China's bid
6 to host the 2008 Olympics and the granting of that bid was based on the pledge made by
7 President of the Beijing Olympic Organizing Committee (BOCOG) Liu Qi stating: "To make
8 the national capital peaceful and orderly, people must have a means of voicing their opinions,
9 and the mechanism for solving social problems at the grassroots level will be improved."

10 WHEREAS, Since receiving this honor, the Chinese government escalated
11 persecutions of many groups. The groups persecuted, in part, are journalists, political
12 dissidents, human rights attorneys, trade unionists, environmentalists, and victims of property
13 confiscation, Falun Gong practitioners, "unofficial" church members of Christians and
14 Muslims, Tibetan Buddhists.

15 WHEREAS, The Beijing 2008 Olympic Games has become a reason for political
16 persecutions by Chinese government such as that of Yang Chunlin, an activist from
17 Heilongjiang province, who was arrested in July 2007 and currently awaits trial for his
18 signature in the petition by farmers protesting land seizures called, "We Want Human Rights,
19 not the Olympics."

20 WHEREAS, According to Human Rights Watch, freedoms of the media are under
21 assault in China ahead of the 2008 Beijing Olympics. "The Chinese government's attempts to
22 intimidate and detain foreign journalists for simply doing their jobs shows contempt for
23 Olympic ideas of fair play. The ongoing harassment and detention of journalists makes
24 Beijing's Olympic pledge on media freedoms seem more like a public relations ploy than a
25 sincere policy initiative."

1 WHEREAS, In October 2007, Ronggyal Adrak, a Tibetan nomad who was being
2 prosecuted for publicly calling for religious freedoms and a visit to Tibet by the Dalai Lama,
3 was found guilty of subversion and “inciting separatism” and has been sentenced five years in
4 jail; and,

5 WHEREAS, According to Human Rights Watch, the increasing use of subversion
6 charges, a state security offense, to silence dissent is consistent with official statistics from
7 the Ministry of Justice, and reflects an increase of almost twenty percent of state security
8 convictions between 2006 and 2007, for example: Hu Jia, a leading human rights activist,
9 was formally arrested on January 30, 2008. Hu was taken by the police from his home on
10 December 27, 2007, shortly after he gave testimony via webcam to the European Parliament
11 in which he expressed his desire for 2008 to be “the year of human rights in China.”

12 WHEREAS, The United Nations Human Rights Counsel reported information on March
13 15, 2006 regarding allegations received of organ harvesting inflicted on a large number of
14 unwilling Falun Gong practitioners for the purpose of making available organs for transplant
15 operations. According to the report, vital organs including hearts, kidneys, livers and corneas
16 were systematically harvested from Falun Gong practitioners at Sujiatan Hospital, Shenyang,
17 Liaoning province and other locations” and,

18 WHEREAS, The Chinese government has sold millions of dollars worth of arms to the
19 Sudanese government which have been used against civilians in Darfur; and,

20 WHEREAS, The Chinese government vetoed a draft resolution before the United
21 Nations Security Council calling on the government of Burma to respect human rights and
22 begin a democratic transition; and,

23 WHEREAS the United States Department of State Annual Country Reports on
24 Human Rights Practices reporting on China for 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, described that
25 government's human rights record as poor. Recently for 2006, the condition has deteriorated

1 in Tibet. The Department also stated that the level of repression of religious freedom
2 remained high and that authorities continue to commit serious human rights abuses, including
3 torture, arbitrary arrest and detention, house arrest and surveillance of dissidents, and
4 arbitrary restrictions on free movement; and,

5 WHEREAS, U.S. House Representatives Dana Rohrabacher (CA), Joseph Pitts
6 (Penn.), Eleana Ros-Lehtinen (FL), Thaddeus McCotter (MA), John Doolittle (CA), Dan
7 Burton (Ind.), Frank Wolf (VA), and Christopher Smith (N.J.) have co-sponsored House
8 Resolution 610 (August 2007), calling for a boycott of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games
9 because of on-going human rights violations in China; and,

10 WHEREAS, Last November 2007, U.S. Congressman Adam Schiff and eight of his
11 colleagues sent a letter to Liu Qi, Beijing Olympic Organizing Committee (BOCOG) President,
12 expressing their deep concern “about the lack of improvement of the human rights situation in
13 China. Despite explicit promises made by Chinese government officials in 2001, the Chinese
14 government has not taken serious steps to expand basic rights and freedom;” and,

15 WHEREAS, The global Human Rights Torch Relay (HRTR) started in Athens, Greek
16 on August 9, 2007 has traveled Europe, Australia and Africa and will make its stop in San
17 Francisco on April 5, 2008. Over 35 countries and more than 100 cities are part of the relay
18 that will span across Europe, Asia, North America, Africa and Australia and continue until
19 August 2008, but highlights the message that the “The Olympics & Crimes Against Humanity
20 Cannot Co-exist in China;” and,

21 WHEREAS the Tibetan Freedom Torch will start in Athens, Greece on March 10, 2008
22 and is planned to travel to over 50 cities worldwide, including traveling through Europe, North
23 and South America, Australia, and Asia, and will make its stop in San Francisco on August 8,
24 2008. The Tibetan Freedom Torch is a symbol of the hopes and aspirations of the Tibetan
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1 people for freedom and justice, and of the commitment of people around the world to helping
2 achieve this goal; and,

3 WHEREAS, The Beijing 2008 Torch Relay purposely designated San Francisco as its
4 first and only stop in all of North America. While the publicity of this stop can cover up the
5 human rights crisis inside China, this stop will also provide the people of San Francisco a life
6 time opportunity to help 1.3 billion Chinese people gain more freedoms and rights; and,

7 WHEREAS, The Olympic Charter calls for “respect for universal fundamental ethical
8 principles” and “the harmonious development of man, with a view to promoting a peaceful
9 society concerned with the preservation of human dignity... Any form of discrimination with
10 regard to a country or a person on grounds of race, religion, politics, gender or otherwise is
11 incompatible with belonging to the Olympic Movement”; and,

12 WHEREAS, San Franciscans has a long record for fighting for the advancement of
13 human rights for all people ; now, therefore, be it

14 WHEREAS, The arrival of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Torch is a can be a historic
15 opportunity to reaffirm human dignity and promote fundamental human rights for all people
16 and urge the Government and People's Republic of China to take substantial measures to
17 improve the human rights situation in China and Tibet; and,

18 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors commend the efforts of the Human Rights
19 Torch Relay and the Tibetan Freedom Torch in raising awareness about the human rights
20 situation in China; and, be it

21 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors urges the
22 City’s representative who will officially receive the 2008 Summer Olympic Games Torch to
23 welcome the Torch in the explicit spirit of Olympism, consistent with the United Nations
24 Charter established in this City, and the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human
25 Rights; be it

1 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges the above City Official
 2 to also make publicly known that the 2008 Summer Olympic Games Torch is received with
 3 alarm and protest at the failure of China to meet its past solemn promises to the
 4 international community, including the citizens of San Francisco, to cease the egregious
 5 and ongoing human rights abuses in China and occupied Tibet.

6 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges our representatives in
 7 the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives to take an active role in supporting all efforts
 8 to stop human rights violations in China and throughout the world.

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