

1 [Supporting Strong Public Sector Unions Post a *Janus v. AFSCME* Supreme Court Decision]

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3 **Resolution urging the Mayor and the Department of Human Resources to work with the**
4 **public sector unions in San Francisco to ensure their health and success; and**
5 **supporting the freedom of city employees to participate in strong unions post a United**
6 **States Supreme Court decision on *Janus v. AFSCME*.**

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8 WHEREAS, All families should have the means to thrive in safe and healthy
9 communities; and

10 WHEREAS, The working people who make our city run deserve good jobs that can
11 support families; and

12 WHEREAS, Over the last forty years, working people have become more productive
13 than ever, yet real wages have declined and CEOs make more than ever before; i.e., 347
14 times more than the average person in 2016; and

15 WHEREAS, Being able to come together in unions gives people – particularly women
16 and people of color – a powerful voice in speaking up for themselves, their families, and their
17 communities and ensures they are treated with dignity and respect at work; and

18 WHEREAS, When people stick together in unions, they gain the power in numbers to
19 raise wages and improve benefits like health care for themselves, their families, and all of our
20 communities; and

21 WHEREAS, People working collectively together in unions have won victories like the
22 40-hour work week, overtime pay, and health and safety standards, as well as advanced
23 policies especially important to women like paid leave, earned sick time, and reducing the
24 gender pay gap; and

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1 WHEREAS, When people can negotiate together for strong contracts, higher wages,
2 and safer, dignified working conditions, all of us benefit, our communities are stronger, and
3 our entire economy is made more fair; and

4 WHEREAS, The United States Supreme Court is considering the case *Janus v.*
5 *AFSCME Council 31*, which could restrict unions from requiring dues from non-member
6 employees who benefit from collective bargaining, thereby weakening the unions' power to
7 effectively negotiate on behalf of all public sector workers - such as nurses, teachers, and
8 firefighters; and

9 WHEREAS, An unfavorable decision by United States Supreme Court may deny public
10 sector workers the freedom to access strong unions that make our communities safe, more
11 equitable, and strong; and

12 WHEREAS, In states where public union rights have come under attack, we have seen
13 different outcomes – in Wisconsin, for example, union membership has fallen 38% after the
14 state passed a law curtailing collective bargaining in 2011, but in other states such as Ohio
15 and New Hampshire, unions have been able to survive similar attacks through proactive
16 strategies; and

17 WHEREAS, The late Mayor Ed Lee, meeting with statewide and local labor leaders
18 before his passing, committed his administration to doing all it could to encourage city
19 employees to continue membership in their unions; and

20 WHEREAS, the City of San Francisco relies on those who work in public service to
21 provide health care, educate our children, put out fires, fix our potholes, drive our buses, pick
22 up our trash, and more; now, therefore, be it

23 RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco supports the freedom of all
24 city employees to exercise their rights to a voice and dignity on the job through joining
25 together in strong unions; and, be it

1 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges the Mayor and the
2 Department of Human Resources to work with the public sector unions in San Francisco to
3 ensure their health and success post a *Janus v. AFSCME* Supreme Court case decision by
4 engaging in good faith discussions around implementing a “gold card” membership such as
5 that which is being proposed by the San Francisco Labor Council’s Public Employee
6 Committee, providing annual membership commitments and adequate release time for rank
7 and file union leaders to explain the implications of a negative *Janus* decision and to
8 encourage continued union membership to their city employee colleagues.

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