

1 [Fred Ross Sr. Medal of Freedom Resolution]

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3 **Resolution requesting President Barack Obama to award posthumously the**
4 **Presidential Medal of Freedom to legendary organizer, Fred Ross, Sr.**

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6 WHEREAS, Fred Ross, Sr.'s life embodied all that the Presidential Medal of Honor
7 seeks to recognize: especially meritorious contributions to the security and national interests
8 of the United States, world peace, cultural, and other significant public and private endeavors;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, His entire life's work was a spirited, defiant, persistent struggle for freedom
11 and equality on behalf of the dispossessed, the marginalized, and the despised; and

12 WHEREAS, He organized legions in a struggle for inclusion, equity, fairness and
13 human dignity; and

14 WHEREAS, He frequently succeeded in guaranteeing for all citizens, at a time when
15 glaring contradictions in American life denied access to the ballot box, membership in unions,
16 and equal protection under the law; and

17 WHEREAS, He mentored American treasures, Cesar Chavez, Ed Roybal, Hector
18 Tarango and Dolores Huerta, all organizing on behalf of the disenfranchised; and

19 WHEREAS, He led from the shadows of others because he understood that he was
20 facilitating inclusion and empowerment rather than seeking to control; and

21 WHEREAS, He struggled mightily against the shame of the Japanese 'relocation'
22 camps during World War II; and

23 WHEREAS, He struggled for six decades to bring dignity to farm workers; and

24 WHEREAS, He revolutionized minority access to the ballot box nearly two decades
25 before the 1965 Voting Rights Act; and

1 WHEREAS, He fought for racial equality as a member of the Council on Race
2 Relations; and

3 WHEREAS, He mentored and trained Hector Tarango whose brilliant struggle in the
4 courts led to the 1947 Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals decision Mendez v. Westminster School
5 District holding that the segregation of Mexican school children violated the United States
6 Constitution's guarantees of equal protection and helping to lay the foundation for the United
7 States Supreme Court's 1954 ruling in Brown v. Board of Education; and

8 WHEREAS, Fred Ross, Sr. understood the implications of globalization long before it
9 would become a household word; and

10 WHEREAS, Organizing in the 1980's with his son and namesake, Fred Ross Jr., he
11 stood against American aid to the Contras in Nicaragua and military aid to El Salvador; and

12 WHEREAS, The vitality of our Constitution today owes much to the work of Fred Ross,
13 Sr., now, therefore be it

14 RESOLVED, The City and County of San Francisco Board of Supervisors recognize
15 the enduring legacy of Fred Ross, Sr. as an organizer who built collective action, citizenship
16 engagement, and leadership development and in recognition of this unsung hero, we urge
17 President Barack Obama to confer the Presidential Medal of Freedom posthumously upon
18 Fred Ross, Sr.

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