

**Amendment of the whole
in committee. 04/13/09**

FILE NO. 090342

RESOLUTION NO.

1 [Resolution recognizing freshwater as a human right and the importance of access to safe
2 drinking water for all]

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4 **Resolution recognizing freshwater as a human right and the importance of access to**
5 **safe drinking water for all.**

6 WHEREAS, The 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
7 established March 22 as World Water Day to promote the international observance of
8 freshwater as a human right for all persons; and

9 WHEREAS, Freshwater is fundamental for life, a finite natural resource, and belongs
10 to the earth and all species for all time; and

11 WHEREAS, Available freshwater represents less than one-half of the world's total
12 water stock; and

13 WHEREAS, Global consumption of water is doubling every 20 years, more than twice
14 the rate of human population growth; and

15 WHEREAS, More than one billion people already lack adequate access to safe
16 drinking water, 2.5 billion people have no access to proper sanitation and more than five
17 million people, mostly children, die each year from water related diseases; and

18 WHEREAS, Unsustainable practices lead to the destruction of aquifers, falling water
19 tables, and ground and surface water pollution; and

20 WHEREAS, Indigenous peoples have had waters on which they depend dangerously
21 polluted and exploited; and

22 WHEREAS, The Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami in December 2004 aggravated
23 the already overwhelming water crisis and the World Health Organization projects that without
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1 mobilized and coordinated assistance, there could be as many fatalities from diseases, water
2 borne, as were seen from the actual disaster itself; and

3 WHEREAS, Current United Nations Millennium Development Goals now call for
4 reducing by one-half the number of those without safe drinking water and sanitation by the
5 year 2015; and

6 WHEREAS, The United Nations committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights
7 has adopted the General Comment on the right to water, which states that the human right to
8 drinking water is fundamental for life and health, and sufficient and safe drinking water is a
9 precondition for the realization of all other human rights; now, therefore, be it

10 RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors recognizes freshwater as a
11 fundamental and human right for all, the importance of access to sanitation and safe drinking
12 water, and that water management priorities should reflect the goals of preservation and
13 sustainable development of water resources; and, be it

14 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors endorses
15 Assembly Bill 1242, which establishes a right to water for basic human needs as a policy of
16 the state of California.

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