

1 [Supporting ACA17, primary voting rights for seventeen year olds.]

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3 **Resolution supporting ACA 17 which would allow for seventeen year olds who would**
4 **turn eighteen prior to a general election to vote in the primary election for that general**
5 **election.**

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7 WHEREAS, Election 2000 set the record low for youth voter turnout in presidential
8 elections. Only 32.3% of 18- 24 year olds voted in the 2000 elections, down from 32.4% in
9 1996; and,

10 WHEREAS, The turnout of Americans between the ages of 18 and 24 has fallen from
11 50% to 32% since 1972 – a much steeper drop than the decline among older Americans. In
12 fact, turnout among senior citizens has increased since 1972; and,

13 WHEREAS, The under-25 age group accounted for 5.1% of the votes cast in 1998
14 despite being 14% of the population. In contrast, citizens over the age of 65, who comprise
15 16% of the population, comprised 33% of the votes cast; and,

16 WHEREAS, Throughout recent years voter turnout has been dropping drastically, and
17 remains at it's lowest in the 18 - 24 year old age group which might prompt fears that voter
18 turnout for sixteen and seventeen year olds would be equally apathetic, yet, in places that
19 have lowered their voting age the reverse is true, such as in Hanover, Germany the voting
20 age was lowered to sixteen for local elections, and the result of this action was that 56.6% of
21 16 - 17 year olds came out to vote, compared to 49% of 18-24 year olds; and,

22 WHEREAS, Baltimore, Maryland due to a one-time confusion in the date of the general
23 election allowed sixteen and seventeen year olds to vote in the primary election, which
24 resulted in, without any major push to get youth to vote, 35% of registered voters under the
25 age of 18 came to vote, as opposed to the 36% of all registered adults that came to vote; and,

WHEREAS, A study conducted in 2001 by Interep, an advertising company, found that Teenagers under the age of eighteen spent over \$9.7 billion dollars in sales tax alone, that is more taxes then were paid by the states North Dakota, Wyoming, Vermont, and Montana combined; and,

WHEREAS, Not only are the Youth of today subject to Taxation Without Representation but they are subject to a legal system that handles them with an arbitrarily imposed double standard; Teenagers under the age of eighteen do not have the same voice in the legal system as adults do, yet they can be tried as an adult in a court of law; and,

WHEREAS, The Civil Rights Acts of 1964 states that "any person who has not been adjudged an incompetent and who has completed the sixth grade in a public school in, or a private school accredited by, any State or territory, the District of Columbia, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico where instruction is carried on predominantly in the English language, possesses sufficient literacy, comprehension, and intelligence to vote in a federal election"; and,

WHEREAS, Assemblymember Gene Mullin of South San Francisco, The Industrial City, has introduced Assembly Constitutional Amendment 17 (ACA-17) which reads: "A person who is at least 17 years of age and will be at least 18 years of age at the time of the next general election may, subject to compliance with applicable registration requirements, vote at that general election and at any intervening primary or special election that occurs after the person is eligible to register to vote," now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That The San Francisco Board of Supervisors finds that democracy functions best when all arbitrary barriers to participation are eliminated; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That The San Francisco Board of Supervisors endorses ACA-17 and encourages the legislature to submit the measure to the voters and urges the electorate of California to vote in the affirmative.