

1 [Supporting California Assembly Bill No. 1550 (Bonta) - Discriminatory Emergency Calls]

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3 **Resolution supporting California Assembly Bill No. 1550, authored by Assembly**
4 **Member Rob Bonta and co-authored by Assembly Member Buffy Wicks, on**
5 **discriminatory emergency calls.**

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7 WHEREAS, All over the United States including in the San Francisco Bay Area,
8 incidents of people harassing and calling 911 on Black people and people of color doing daily
9 activities continue to happen; and

10 WHEREAS, With the rise of smartphones, there has been an increase of racial profiling
11 and discriminatory incidents recorded and posted on social media and subsequently
12 broadcasted on the news; and

13 WHEREAS, In May 2018, an individual later dubbed “Barbecue Becky” called the
14 police on a group of Black men who were having a barbecue at Lake Merritt in Oakland; and

15 WHEREAS, In June 2018, an individual later dubbed “Permit Patty” called the police on
16 an 8-year-old Black girl for “illegally selling water without a permit” in front of her residence
17 across from Oracle Park in San Francisco; and

18 WHEREAS, In July 2018, neighbors in the Mission called the police on the Black owner
19 of Gourmonade lemon stand, accusing him of breaking into his own business; and

20 WHEREAS, In July 2019 in San Francisco, an individual called the police on a Black
21 man for breaking into an apartment building while he was waiting for his disabled friend in the
22 lobby and telling him that he did not look like he belonged there; and

23 WHEREAS, In July 2019, a youth program called Project Level, which employs 75
24 disadvantaged youth through Mayor London Breed’s Opportunities For All Initiative, brought
25 their interns to the Forever 21 flagship store on Stockton Street to purchase clothes for a

1 video shoot, was confronted by the store manager and police officers and falsely accused of
2 shoplifting; and

3 WHEREAS, In May 2020, an individual called the police on a Black man who was
4 dancing and exercising on the street in his neighborhood in Alameda; and

5 WHEREAS, In May 2020, a woman called the police on a Black man who was bird
6 watching in New York's Central Park while accusing him of harassing her; and

7 WHEREAS, In June 2020, a couple called the police on a Filipino man stenciling "Black
8 Lives Matter" in chalk in front of his own residence in Pacific Heights; and

9 WHEREAS, On May 25, 2020, George Floyd was killed after someone called the police
10 to accuse him of using counterfeit money at a store where he purchased cigarettes; and

11 WHEREAS, These are only a few examples that have been publicized and there are
12 many more that do not get news coverage or are not recorded; and

13 WHEREAS, Countless Black Indigenous People of Color have died at the hands of law
14 enforcement or was put in danger because of fraudulent 911 calls; and

15 WHEREAS, There are currently no consequences by law for people who make
16 fraudulent emergency calls based on racial bias and racism; and

17 WHEREAS, Black Indigenous People of Color suffer from post-traumatic stress
18 disorder as a result of law enforcement violating their rights to everyday normal activities
19 based on fraudulent 911 calls by an individual's racial bias and racism; and

20 WHEREAS, Frivolous emergency calls against People of Color is a form of racial
21 violence; and

22 WHEREAS, In June 2020, Assembly Member Rob Bonta of Oakland, introduced
23 California State Assembly Bill No. 1550 (AB 1550) to end discriminatory 911 calls motivated
24 by an individual's race, religion, sex, or any other protected class by designating such reports
25 as a hate crime; and

1 WHEREAS, AB 1550 will also provide a civil remedy for people harmed by
2 discriminatory 911 calls; and

3 WHEREAS, AB 1550 will establish civil liability for the person committing the
4 discriminatory 911 call; and

5 WHEREAS, Under current California law, it is a criminal misdemeanor to make false
6 police reports, however, the current law does not include accountability measures to address
7 discrimination if a person summons law enforcement because they perceive another
8 individual to be a threat due to their race, religion, outward appearance, or inclusion in a
9 protected class; and

10 WHEREAS, While current hate crime law may apply to a specific crime, it currently
11 does not apply to the crime of making a false emergency report; and

12 WHEREAS, The intent of AB 1550 is to not discourage individuals who are facing real
13 danger or who seek to report a crime in good faith from calling 911 but instead protect millions
14 of Californians from becoming targets of hate and prevent the weaponization of law
15 enforcement against communities of color; and

16 WHEREAS, AB 1550 is part of a larger nationwide movement to address racial bias
17 and implement consequences for utilizing emergency resources for racist intentions; and

18 WHEREAS, When law enforcement respond to non-emergency calls as a result of the
19 caller's racism and racial bias, it diverts resources away from actual emergencies to the
20 unnecessary policing of people of color; and

21 WHEREAS, In July 2020, Supervisor Walton introduced similar legislation amending
22 the San Francisco Police Code to make it unlawful for an individual to contact law
23 enforcement solely to discriminate on the basis of a person's race, ethnicity, religious
24 affiliation, gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity; now, therefore, be it
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1 RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors reiterates its responsibility
2 to work to prevent discrimination in all its forms including emergency calls; and, be it

3 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors support the
4 California Assembly Bill 1550 to end discriminatory 911 calls and urges the State Assembly.
5 State Senate and Governor Gavin Newsom to pass the bill; and, be it

6 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors hereby directs the Clerk of the
7 Board to transmit a copy of this Resolution to the California State Assembly, the California
8 State Senate, and Governor Gavin Newsom.

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