

1 [Honoring Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women - May 5]

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3 **Resolution recognizing May 5 as the national day of awareness for Honoring Missing**
4 **and Murdered Indigenous Women.**

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6 WHEREAS, Indigenous people have inhabited the North American continent, including
7 the State of California, for many centuries, and from the first contact with settlers from other
8 countries, Native Americans shared their knowledge of the land and its resources, and have
9 continued to play a vital role in the development of local communities, the State of California,
10 and the nation; and

11 WHEREAS, The Indian Relocation Act of 1956 named San Francisco as one of four
12 cities in California to be a landing place for promised job training and was a law intended to
13 encourage Native Americans in the United States to leave Indian reservations and their
14 traditional lands and to assimilate into the general population in urban areas; between the
15 1950s and 1980s, as many as 750,000 Native Americans migrated to cities, and it is well
16 documented that overall, the program had devastating long-term effects including but not
17 limited to an increase of missing and murdered indigenous women; and

18 WHEREAS, The Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls Report from the
19 Urban Indian Health Institute released in 2019 provides data from 71 urban cities across the
20 United States on missing and murdered indigenous women and girls; recognizes that a
21 number of factors, including poor data collection by law enforcement and limited health
22 resources, that there is an undercount of missing and murdered indigenous women (MMIW) in
23 urban areas; and finds that San Francisco ranks tenth among cities with highest number of
24 MMIW cases; and

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1 WHEREAS, The 2009 Apology to Native People of the U.S. recognized the special
2 legal and political relationship Indian tribes have with the United States and the solemn
3 covenant with the land we share; recognized that there have been years of official
4 depredation, ill-conceived policies, and the breaking of covenants by the Federal Government
5 regarding Indian tribes; apologized on behalf of the people of the United States to all Native
6 Peoples for the many instances of violence, maltreatment, and neglect inflicted on Native
7 Peoples by citizens of the United States; and commended the State governments that have
8 begun reconciliation efforts with Native American tribes located in their boundaries and
9 encourage all State governments to work toward reconciling relationships with Indian tribes
10 within their boundaries; and

11 WHEREAS, The Bay Area has one of the highest populations of Native Americans in
12 the country, and San Francisco specifically continues to be a place of residence, activism and
13 cultural empowerment for the Native American community; and

14 WHEREAS, The City of San Francisco has taken progressive steps in restoration of
15 American Indian traditions and policies such as legislating Indigenous People’s Day,
16 supporting the American Indian Cultural Center, and compelling the removal of the ‘Early
17 Days’ statue in the Civic Center; and

18 WHEREAS, The City and County of San Francisco has a responsibility to address the
19 disproportionate rates of victimization of indigenous women from domestic and sexual
20 violence, including missing and murdered indigenous women; and;

21 WHEREAS, Jessica Nicole Alva (Blackfeet, Aztec, Yaqui) died on April 6, 2019, at the
22 age of 35 after being in a coma for four days as a result of an abusive domestic relationship;
23 and

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1 WHEREAS, Jessica grew up in Redding and lived in San Francisco for five years and
2 is survived by her mother Cindy Martin-Wolfe, six children, and four siblings with a step-
3 brother and step-sister; and

4 WHEREAS, Organizations dedicated to documenting and monitoring MMIW, such as
5 the Sovereign Bodies Institute, continue to face challenges with local jurisdictions' record-
6 keeping and cooperation, including the San Francisco Department, and specifically, in the
7 case of Jessica Alva; and

8 WHEREAS, In 2005, the grassroots movement for the safety of indigenous women led
9 the struggle to include Title IX: Safety for Indian Women under the Violence Against Women
10 Act. One of the findings of this title was that during the period of 1979 through 1992, homicide
11 was the third-leading cause of death of Native American women aged 15 to 34; and

12 WHEREAS, Since that time, a study by the U.S. Department of Justice has found that
13 in some tribal communities, Native American women face murder rates that are more than ten
14 times the national average; and

15 WHEREAS, Over the last decade, awareness of this national issue has increased but
16 more must be done at all levels to stop the disappearances and save lives; and

17 WHEREAS, May 5, 2017, was designated as the first national day of awareness for
18 Honoring Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women through the efforts of surviving families,
19 Native American tribes, national Indigenous organizations, and law and policy makers; now,
20 therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco permanently designates May
22 5 as Honoring Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Day in the City and County of San
23 Francisco; and, be it

24 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco will begin
25 discussions with urban Native American organizations, neighboring Native American tribes,

1 and local tribal organizations to develop recommendations for local and indigenous victim
2 advocacy services, local and tribal justice responses, including coordination, and identify and
3 implement solutions to strengthen the safety, health, and well-being of indigenous women.

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