

1 [Honoring Rosa Parks]

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3 **Resolution commemorating the life and mourning the loss of Rosa Parks, an icon of**
4 **the Civil Rights Movement whose brave act of refusing to give up her seat on an**
5 **Alabama bus in 1955 led to the end of legalized segregation in the United States; and**
6 **further declaring that December 1st shall annually be observed as Rosa Parks**
7 **Commemoration Day in the City and County of San Francisco and further urging the**
8 **President of the United States and the United States Congress to officially designate**
9 **December 1st as a holiday to commemorate the life and contribution of Rosa Parks and**
10 **the legacy of the Civil Rights movement in the United States; and further encouraging**
11 **all businesses in the City, both public and private, to either close on December 1st or**
12 **allow the many workers and students in the City who will want to attend Rosa Parks**
13 **Commemoration events taking place during normal business hours to take the day off**
14 **or to leave work and school early with impunity.**

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16 WHEREAS, Rosa Parks, an icon of the Civil Rights Movement, died on October 24,
17 2005 at the age of 92; and

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19 WHEREAS, Rosa Parks was born Rosa Lee McCauley in Tuskegee, Alabama, on
20 February 4, 1913, to James and Leona McCauley; and

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22 WHEREAS, Growing up in segregated Montgomery, Alabama during the 1920's and
23 1930's, Rosa Parks was forced to attend second-rate all-black schools, such as the
24 Montgomery Industrial School for Girls; and

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1 WHEREAS, Rosa Parks was forced on a daily basis to obey Jim Crow segregation
2 laws governing her behavior in public places, such as having to drink from separate water
3 fountains and not being able to eat at whites-only restaurants, laws that she came to detest at
4 an early age; and

5 WHEREAS, With her mother’s help, and despite the segregation laws that governed at
6 that time, Rosa Parks was able to grow up proud of herself and other black people and
7 believed that “people should be judged by the respect they have for themselves and others;”
8 and

9 WHEREAS, In 1932, Rosa Parks married Raymond Parks, a barber who was active in
10 civil rights causes, and together the couple enjoyed a modest degree of prosperity since Mrs.
11 Parks also worked as a seamstress making bed sheets for the Montgomery Fair department
12 store; and

13 WHEREAS, During the early 1940’s, Rosa Parks and her husband became members
14 of the Voters League, a group that helped blacks pass a special voter registration literacy test
15 which was designed to discourage blacks from voting and later banned by the Voting Rights
16 Act of 1965; and

17 WHEREAS, In 1943, Rosa Parks became active in the American Civil Rights
18 Movement when she began working as a secretary for the Montgomery, Alabama branch of
19 the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (“NAACP”) in her spare time,
20 a position she held until 1957; and

21 WHEREAS, On December 1, 1955, on her way home from work, Rosa Parks boarded
22 a Cleveland Avenue bus in Montgomery, Alabama and sat in the middle section of the bus
23 that was designated for black riders, a section that was not fixed in size, but determined by
24 the placement of a movable sign at the discretion of the bus driver; and
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1 WHEREAS, Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat after the bus driver placed the sign
2 behind her and ordered her and three other black passengers to move so that a lone white
3 man could sit in their seats; and

4 WHEREAS, Rosa Parks' refusal to move from her seat resulted in her arrest and she
5 was subsequently tried and convicted of disorderly conduct, as well as violating a local
6 ordinance and was fined \$14; and

7 WHEREAS, Rosa Parks' arrest and conviction prompted influential leaders of the
8 African-American community in Montgomery, including the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King,
9 Jr., to plan and carry out the Montgomery Bus Boycott, which began on December 5, 1955
10 and lasted for 381 days, until the laws requiring segregation on public buses were repealed;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, Rosa Parks' brave act in December 1955 ushered in the American Civil
13 Rights Movement, which ultimately led to the United States Supreme Court ruling on
14 November 13, 1956 that segregated bus service was unconstitutional, a decision that
15 effectively put an end to the Jim Crow laws that had been established in the South; and

16 WHEREAS, Rosa Parks and her husband lived in Montgomery, Alabama until 1957
17 when they moved to Detroit, Michigan because she lost her job in the Montgomery Fair
18 department store, her husband quit his job after his boss prevented him from talking about his
19 wife's legal case, and because they were the recipients of numerous threats and almost
20 constant telephone harassment; and

21 WHEREAS, After relocating to Detroit, Michigan, Rosa Parks remained devoted to
22 human rights causes and spent the later years of her life being sought out as a dignified
23 spokesperson for the Civil Rights Movement; and

1 WHEREAS, The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once stated that Rosa Parks
2 “was regarded as one of the finest citizens of Montgomery—not one of the finest Negro
3 citizens—but one of the finest citizens of Montgomery;” and

4 WHEREAS, In 1965, Rosa Parks became a staff assistant to United States
5 Representative John Conyers of Michigan, a position she held until her retirement in 1988;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, In February 1987, Rosa Parks and Elaine Eason Steele co-founded The
8 Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self Development, an institute that offers career
9 training for 12 to 18-year-olds and that runs the “Pathways to Freedom” bus tours that
10 introduces young people to important civil rights and underground railroad sites throughout
11 the country; and

12 WHEREAS, Rosa Parks published a children’s book in 1993 entitled “*Rosa Parks: My
13 Story,*” which chronicled her life leading up to that monumental day in 1955 when she refused
14 to give up her seat on the bus, and also published her memoirs *Quiet Strength* in 1995; and

15 WHEREAS, Rosa Parks was the recipient of many honorary doctorate degrees from
16 universities worldwide, an honorary member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, inducted into
17 the Michigan Women’s Hall Fame in 1983, and called upon to be a part of the group
18 welcoming South African President Nelson Mandela to United States in 1990; and

19 WHEREAS, Rosa Parks was the recipient of numerous awards including the NAACP’s
20 Spingarn Medal in 1979, its highest honor, and the Martin Luther King, Sr. award in 1980, the
21 Rosa Parks Peace Prize in Stockholm, Sweden in 1994, and the first International Freedom
22 Conductor Award given by the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in 1998; and
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1 WHEREAS, Rosa Parks received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1996 and the
2 Congressional Gold Medal of Honor in 1999, the highest civilian awards given by the
3 Executive and Legislative branches of the United States government; and

4 WHEREAS, In November 2001, the Rosa Parks Library and Museum in Montgomery,
5 Alabama was dedicated and is located on the corner where Mrs. Parks boarded the famed
6 bus; and

7 WHEREAS, Rosa Parks' courageous act on the Montgomery bus on December 1,
8 1955 earned her the nickname "Mother of the Civil Rights Movement;" now, therefore be it
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10 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco
11 commemorates the life and mourns the loss of Rosa Parks, an icon of the Civil Rights
12 Movement whose brave act of refusing to give up her seat on an Alabama bus in 1955 led to
13 the end of legalized segregation in the United States; and, be it

14 FUTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors declares that December 1st shall
15 annually be observed as Rosa Parks Commemoration Day in the City and County of San
16 Francisco; and, be it

17 FUTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges the President of the United
18 States and the United States Congress to officially designate December 1st as a holiday to
19 commemorate the life and contribution of Rosa Parks and the legacy of the Civil Rights
20 Movement in the United States; and, be it

21 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors encourages all businesses in
22 the City, both public and private, to either close on December 1st or allow the many workers
23 and students in the City who will want to attend Rosa Parks Commemoration events taking
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1 place during normal business hours to take the day off or leave work and school early with
2 impunity.

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