

1 [Urging State Officials to Reconsider the Closure of Outdoor Public Playgrounds]

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3 **Resolution urging Governor Gavin Newsom, California Department of Health Acting**  
4 **Director Sandra Shewry, and Acting State Health Officer Dr. Erica S. Pan to reconsider**  
5 **the closure of outdoor public playgrounds as part of the December 3, 2020, Regional**  
6 **Stay at Home Order in response to rising rates of COVID-19 infection.**

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8 WHEREAS, Due to an unprecedented 112% rise in the rates of daily COVID-19  
9 infection, as well as the recent doubling of hospital admissions rates due to the spread of the  
10 coronavirus and the concern that without intervention, Intensive Care Unit (ICU) beds in the  
11 State of California would be at capacity by mid-December, aggressive action was taken and  
12 the Acting State Public Health Officer issued a statewide Stay at Home Order starting on  
13 December 5, 2020, that will last at least three weeks; and

14 WHEREAS, The recent Stay at Home Order includes the closure of outdoor public  
15 playgrounds while allowing other activities and venues such as shopping at in-door malls; and

16 WHEREAS, According to the most updated reports from the World Health Organization  
17 (WHO), current research indicates that COVID-19 is primarily transmitted through respiratory  
18 droplets that are spread when an infected individual coughs, sneezes, or talks; and

19 WHEREAS, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have advised that shared  
20 or public surfaces are not the main way that COVID-19 is transmitted; and

21 WHEREAS, Studies have shown that COVID-19 is spread less easily outdoors, and  
22 outdoor activity is considered low-risk provided that certain safety precautions such as  
23 wearing a mask and social distancing are observed; and

24 WHEREAS, Experts including Harvard Medical School physician Doctor Abraar Karan  
25 agree that allowing children to access playgrounds is a low-risk activity when certain

1 precautions are observed including avoiding overcrowding, regularly cleaning high-touch  
2 areas, and making sure hands are sanitized when play is over; and

3 WHEREAS, Out of the tens of thousands of research papers published on COVID-19,  
4 not one of them has found playgrounds to be a significant source of transmission; and

5 WHEREAS, Playground play is beneficial for the mental health of children and their  
6 parents; and

7 WHEREAS, The mental health of children and their parents has been heavily impacted  
8 by blanket stay at home orders that (1) restrict children to indoor activities; (2) limit their ability  
9 to play and exercise their growing bodies; and (3) manage the stress and anxiety brought on  
10 by the pandemic; and

11 WHEREAS, Children in low-income families, particularly children in dense, urban areas  
12 that live in apartment buildings without access to private yards, suffer the most from  
13 playgrounds being shut down; and

14 WHEREAS, The Tenderloin is one of the most densely populated neighborhoods in the  
15 city and is the neighborhood with the highest concentration of children in all of San Francisco,  
16 and it is also the neighborhood with the least amount of open space, which has left the many  
17 children of the Tenderloin trapped in small apartments for almost a year; and

18 WHEREAS, Access to playgrounds like those at Father Alfred E. Boeddeker  
19 Park, Sergeant John Macaulay Park, Turk and Hyde Mini Park, the Helen Diller Civic Center  
20 Playground, and Victoria Manalo Draves Park can be stewarded and maintained to help  
21 maintain safety protocols, provide vital opportunities for exercise and recreation, and keep our  
22 children and families safe; now, therefore, be it

23 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges Governor Gavin Newsom, Director  
24 Sandra Shewry, and Dr. Erica S. Pan to reconsider the closure of outdoor public playgrounds  
25 as part of the most recent Regional Stay at Home Order; and, be it

1           FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors directs the Clerk of the Board  
2 to transmit copies of this Resolution to the offices of California Governor Gavin Newsom,  
3 California Department of Health Acting Director Sandra Shewry, and Acting State Health  
4 Officer Dr. Erica S. Pan; and, be it

5           FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors directs the Clerk of the Board  
6 to transmit copies of this Resolution to the San Francisco Mayor’s Office, Department of  
7 Public Health Director Dr. Grant Colfax, and the San Francisco Public Health Officer Dr.  
8 Tomás Aragón.