

1 [Urging City Boards and Commissions to Adopt Youth Voice Policies]

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3 **Resolution urging all youth-serving City Boards and Commissions to adopt new**  
4 **guidelines for public meetings that include provisions explicitly authorizing the Youth**  
5 **Commission to request hearings or discussions on legislation referred to the Youth**  
6 **Commission according to City Charter, Section 4.124, to be scheduled at an hour of the**  
7 **day that can accommodate youth.**

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9 WHEREAS, Public participation, and specifically youth participation, in local public  
10 hearings is at the core of our democratic process and is essential for municipal government to  
11 work effectively; and

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13 WHEREAS, State law ensures that meetings held by local agencies are open to the  
14 public and that all members of the public have a meaningful opportunity to observe and take  
15 part in the decision-making process of local governmental bodies; and

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17 WHEREAS, Pursuant to Section 54954.3 of the Brown Act, the public is guaranteed  
18 the right to provide testimony at any regular or special meeting on any subject which will be  
19 considered by the legislative body before or during its consideration of the item; and

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21 WHEREAS, While every meeting of the City boards and commissions are open to the  
22 public, in practice structural barriers exist that prevent the participation of youth 18 years of  
23 age and younger, namely the scheduling of public hearings during regular school day hours  
24 and laws requiring youth to attend school absent of explicit permission from a parent or  
25 guardian; and

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27 WHEREAS, Youth are typically underrepresented in municipal governments, and are  
28 unable to participate in democratically electing public officials until age 18; and

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1           WHEREAS, According to the Spring 2012 Youth Vote Student Survey, 43% of  
2 surveyed SFUSD students “don’t care at all” about government and politics and 25% are only  
3 “a little interested” about government and politics; and

4           WHEREAS, More opportunities to testify in front of public officials on relevant and  
5 impactful issues could increase youth engagement in government and politics; and

6           WHEREAS, At the March 6th, 2012, meeting of the San Francisco Municipal  
7 Transportation Agency, of 37 speakers providing public comment starting just before 2:00 PM  
8 and ending at 3:42 p.m. regarding the proposed “Free MUNI for Youth” Program, only two  
9 were youth, while at the same meeting, of the 39 speakers providing public comment after  
10 3:42 p.m., 32 were youth; and

11           WHEREAS, At a subsequent meeting of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation  
12 Agency on April 17th, 2012, at 1:00 p.m., of the 17 speakers providing public comment at the  
13 beginning of the meeting on the proposed “Free MUNI for Youth” Program, one was a youth;  
14 and

15           WHEREAS, As stated in Section 54953.7 of the Brown Act, elected legislative bodies  
16 may impose requirements upon themselves or on agencies under their jurisdiction which allow  
17 greater access to their meetings than prescribed by the minimal standards set forth by the  
18 Act; and

19           WHEREAS, On March 3, 2014, the San Francisco Youth Commission passed a  
20 resolution urging the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and youth-serving boards and  
21 commissions to adopt new processes to accommodate youth participation; now, therefore, be  
22 it

23           RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors urges all youth-serving City  
24 boards and Commissions to adopt new guidelines for public meetings that include provisions  
25 explicitly authorizing the Youth Commission to request hearings or discussions on legislation

1 referred to the Youth Commission according to City Charter, Section 4.124 to be scheduled at  
2 an hour of the day that can better accommodate youth participation.

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