

1 [Urging the California Public Utilities Commission to Deny AT&T’s Request to Relinquish its
2 Carrier of Last Resort and Eligible Telecommunications Carrier Designations]

3 **Resolution urging the California Public Utilities Commission to deny AT&T’s request to**
4 **relinquish its Carrier of Last Resort (COLR) and Eligible Telecommunications Carrier**
5 **(ETC) Designations without conditions to require AT&T to transition remaining**
6 **customers to upgraded or alternative services, or until an alternative COLR or ETC has**
7 **been identified to ensure all residents have access to basic, affordable phone service.**

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9 WHEREAS, On March 3, 2023, AT&T submitted applications to the California Public
10 Utilities Commission (CPUC), requesting to be relinquished from its Carrier of Last Resort
11 (COLR) obligation and to surrender its designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier
12 (ETC) in California; and

13 WHEREAS, Given that AT&T is the COLR and ETC providing telephone service to the
14 City and County of San Francisco, the CPUC’s decision on AT&T’s requests will affect both
15 residential and business customers citywide; and

16 WHEREAS, The CPUC created the COLR obligation to ensure that everyone in
17 California has access to reliable phone service and defines COLR as a telecommunications
18 service provider that is legally required to provide access to basic telephone service, typically
19 “plain old telephone service” (POTS), to any customers requesting such service; and

20 WHEREAS, By granting AT&T’s request to relinquish its COLR obligation without
21 confirming whether existing POTS customers have access to alternative telephone lines or
22 the capability to seek comparable phone services, the CPUC will essentially remove the
23 current safety net that guarantees every resident access to affordable, quality phone service;
24 and

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1 WHEREAS, Although in its Application Summary, AT&T claims that “approval of the
2 application would harm no one” because 99.95 percent of consumers in AT&T California’s
3 service territory live in areas with at least one comparably or lower-priced broadband or
4 mobile wireless voice alternatives to POTS, approximately 62,779 (33,842 residential and
5 28,937 business) POTS lines remain in San Francisco, according to data extracted from
6 AT&T’s Amended Application, dated May 17, 2023; and

7 WHEREAS, Many San Franciscans continue to rely on POTS for emergency calls
8 given that among the 62,779 POTS lines, 26,476 emergency calls were made to 911 in 2023,
9 according to data obtained from San Francisco Department of Emergency Management
10 received on February 20, 2024; and

11 WHEREAS, The CPUC defines an ETC as a telephone company operating in a area
12 that receives financial assistance from the federal government-established Universal Service
13 Fund to provide quality and affordable telephone service to customers at all income levels;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, The CPUC’s approval of AT&T’s requests to surrender its ETC
16 designation would allow AT&T to stop offering federal Lifeline program, which is designed to
17 help subsidize telephone service for low-income customers; and

18 WHEREAS, According to its Frequently Asked Questions, the CPUC anticipates that a
19 household receiving federal Lifeline from AT&T may see an increase of \$5.25 per month for
20 voice-only service, or \$9.25 per month for bundled or internet service if AT&T’s requests are
21 approved without conditions; and

22 WHEREAS, The CPUC is holding Public Participation Hearings, in person and virtually,
23 to offer the public a chance to understand and express their concerns regarding AT&T’s
24 request and how CPUC’s decision might affect customers throughout California; now,
25 therefore, be it

1 RESOLVED, That the Board urges the community to participate in the CPUC's next
2 virtual Public Participation Hearings on March 19, 2024, and offer your feedback about
3 AT&T's requests; and, be it

4 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges the California Public Utilities
5 Commission to deny AT&T's request unless the CPUC requires AT&T to transition remaining
6 customers to upgraded or alternative services, or until an alternative Carrier of Last Resort or
7 Eligible Telecommunications Carrier Designation has been identified to ensure all residents
8 continue to have access to basic, affordable phone service; and, be it

9 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the Board is hereby directed to transmit
10 copies of this Resolution to the California Public Utilities Commission as a demonstration of
11 the Board's commitment to ensure everyone continues to have access to basic, and
12 potentially lifesaving, phone service without disruption.

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