

1 [Recognizing and Honoring the Service and Sacrifices of the Filipino Nurse Community]

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3 **Resolution recognizing and honoring the service and sacrifices of the Filipino Nurse**
4 **community; recognizing the disproportionate impact that the Filipino nurses and their**
5 **families have experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic; and expressing gratitude to**
6 **them for their contributions and remembering those who made the ultimate sacrifice.**

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8 WHEREAS, May is Asian Pacific American Heritage Month and May 6 through May 12,
9 2021 is National Nurses Week; and

10 WHEREAS, COVID-19 exacerbated existing inequities in the healthcare industry, and
11 specifically highlighted the acute Filipino nurses deaths; and

12 WHEREAS, While Filipino nurses make up 4% of all the nurses in the United States,
13 they make up 31.5% of all nurse deaths from COVID-19; and

14 WHEREAS, Given the nature of nurses work, they are the frontline healers of our
15 medical community and are the most at risk for contracting and dying from COVID-19; and

16 WHEREAS, Filipino American nurses have become the most impacted frontline
17 medical workers in the country's fight against COVID; and

18 WHEREAS, The history of Filipinos in the nursing field date back to the 1898 Treaty of
19 Paris, where the U.S. took the Philippines from Spain and ruled over the Philippines as a
20 territory of the United States; and

21 WHEREAS, Even after the Philippines was recognized as a sovereign state in 1946,
22 the United States retained control through unequal agreements that benefited the U.S. and its
23 citizens at the expense of Filipinos; and

24 WHEREAS, The Philippines under U.S. control was under new wave colonialism
25 practicing "benevolent assimilation" of the Philippines into U.S. culture; and

1 WHEREAS, “Benevolent assimilation” was part of colonization and was used to shift
2 the narrative and portray colonialism as one of friendship, in which Filipinos were viewed as
3 “little brown brothers” to be civilized under the guise of benefiting the Philippines, which
4 included the training of Filipinos in healthcare, but was actually a part of the U.S. manifest
5 destiny ideology to advance colonial exploitation; and

6 WHEREAS, The U.S. pointed to the presence of disease and “primitive dirty uncivilized
7 ways of Filipinos,” toting the narrative that Filipinos needed Americans to colonize and uplift
8 them specifically through the lens of health care; and

9 WHEREAS, The U.S. established nursing schools in the Philippines and actively
10 recruited Filipina women and actively discouraged Filipino men from entering the nursing
11 profession; and

12 WHEREAS, For decades, nurses in the Philippines nursing schools were being trained
13 through Americanized medicine; and

14 WHEREAS, When the U.S. started to experience nursing shortages in the 1960’s partly
15 because of feminism and the movement of American women shifting from “support roles” in
16 healthcare to lawyers and doctors, it was not until then that the U.S. began seeing a big wave
17 of Filipino nurses migrating to the U.S. following heavy recruitment of Filipino nurses who
18 were American-trained and who spoke English into the U.S. workforce; and

19 WHEREAS, This was made possible due to the historic immigration bill, the 1965
20 Immigration Act, which gave preference to immigrants with special skills, like nursing and
21 those who were seen as able to contribute the most to U.S. economy; and

22 WHEREAS, Filipinos became the largest immigrant group to work in American nursing;
23 and

24 WHEREAS, Filipino nurses in particular have spent their careers doing hands on work
25 concentrated in critical care, such as being in Intensive Care Units, Emergency Rooms,

1 Pediatric Intensive Care Units, Transplant Teams, disproportionately serving in high risk
2 departments, which can begin to further explain why so many Filipino nurses died during the
3 COVID - 19 pandemic; and

4 WHEREAS, Many nurses came back from retirement to assist in the pandemic; and

5 WHEREAS, Nursing is intimate hard work and during a pandemic often times it was
6 nurses who sat at the bedside of patients who died alone in hospitals, displaying the highest
7 commitment to those they served and directly worked with; and

8 WHEREAS, The deaths of our frontline workers this past year and those in the Filipino
9 Nurse Community are deeply felt and highlight the critical need to better protect nurses, health
10 care providers and those on the frontline; now, therefore be it

11 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors recognizes and honors the service and
12 sacrifices of the Filipino Nurse Community; and

13 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco thanks the nursing
14 community for all their work, and specifically recognizes the Filipino Nurse Community and the
15 added inequity that was faced and will commit to amplifying Asian and Pacific Islander voices;
16 and

17 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors will commit to advocating for
18 better support systems for Asian and Pacific Islander frontline healthcare workers.

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