

1 [Intent to Prioritize Funding Free City College of San Francisco]

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3 **Resolution reclaiming the promise of free higher education in the City and County of**  
4 **San Francisco by securing funding to eliminate enrollment fees for students who are**  
5 **San Francisco residents or working at least half-time in San Francisco, and by**  
6 **supporting educational costs for enrolled students who are in receipt of federal or state**  
7 **financial aid.**

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9 WHEREAS, The Promise of the landmark California Master Plan for Higher Education  
10 (1960) includes free tuition at all levels of public higher education, specifying that community  
11 colleges should have open enrollment and must afford students an opportunity for a college  
12 education; and

13 WHEREAS, This promise of quality, free education has all but disappeared with  
14 exponential increases in tuition and enrollment fees, and California community colleges, which  
15 were free until 1984, are now \$46 per unit for credit courses; and

16 WHEREAS, Student debt has skyrocketed, saddling recipients of four-year degrees  
17 with an average of \$35,000 in student loan debt upon graduation, which is more than one  
18 trillion dollars nationally, exempt from bankruptcy proceedings, and is now greater than the  
19 nation’s credit-card debt; and

20 WHEREAS, Nationally the movement to make public higher education free has gained  
21 immense momentum, with President Obama unveiling a proposal for free community college  
22 in 2015, at least two Democratic Presidential candidates speaking publicly about making  
23 college “free for all” (Bernie Sanders) or “debt-free” (Hillary Clinton), and at least three states  
24 having established free community college programs statewide, with other states in progress,  
25 and several cities following suit; and

1           WHEREAS, The denial of educational opportunity diminishes economic democracy,  
2 social mobility, public health, and racial justice, and instead strengthens the school-to-prison  
3 pipeline and the use of military enlistment as one of the only means to attain the higher  
4 educational opportunities sought after by many of our low-income students with few, if any,  
5 other options due to financial constraints; and

6           WHEREAS, Working families, union members, caregivers, seniors, individuals re-  
7 entering the workforce, and our San Francisco Unified School District graduates throughout  
8 the City rely on CCSF to train and retrain our workforce, teach English to our immigrant  
9 populations, foster lifelong learning, and provide affordable, accessible pathways into all of  
10 higher education's opportunities; and

11           WHEREAS, San Francisco has the ability to reclaim the California Master Plan for  
12 Higher Education locally and ensure that its community college fulfills its mission, which is to  
13 provide educational programs and services that promote student achievement and life-long  
14 learning to meet the needs of our diverse community; and

15           WHEREAS, A free CCSF that allows San Francisco residents and San Francisco  
16 workers who are employed at least half-time in San Francisco to enroll without paying tuition  
17 or "enrollment" fees will serve more than 20,000 students, including parents, seniors,  
18 individuals re-entering the workforce, recent high school graduates, caregivers, and many of  
19 San Francisco's low-income students pursuing their dreams of attaining higher education and  
20 life-long learning; and

21           WHEREAS, The average median wage for jobs for CCSF graduates who completed  
22 associate degree, certificate or other programs in which they attained job skills required by  
23 San Francisco and other local employers was \$59,800 in the 2011-2012 academic year,  
24 which was \$11,100 more than the average median wage of \$48,700 for jobs that require only  
25 a high school education; and

1           WHEREAS, A free CCSF will expand the school-to-college pipeline, which is essential  
2 to develop an educated workforce with the skills and knowledge needed to compete in the  
3 21st century workforce; and

4           WHEREAS, A free CCSF will support students of all ages, including those who are  
5 arriving at, or returning to, college later in life, and will also benefit the diverse communities  
6 that are enrolled at CCSF, which in academic year 2014-2015 included 30.2% Asian  
7 students, 25% White, 23.2% Latino students, 8.1% African American students, 5.5% Filipino,  
8 0.7% Pacific Islander, 2% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 4.7% multiracial students,  
9 with an increasing number of veterans and a majority of students identifying as female; and

10           WHEREAS, CCSF serves a diverse range of students, including but not limited to  
11 workers in need of training and re-training, low-income and immigrant communities, veterans  
12 and the disabled, lifelong learners, first-generational college attendees, full-and part-time  
13 students in need of second and third chances, as well as students transferring to four-year  
14 institutions; and

15           WHEREAS, The City as a whole will benefit with a more educated and skilled  
16 populace; and

17           WHEREAS, In addition to tuition and enrollment fees, students face education-related  
18 costs (not including room and board or childcare costs) such as transportation, textbooks, and  
19 supplies, estimated by the CCSF Financial Aid Office on the 2015-2016 Student Expense  
20 Budget (“Cost of Attendance”) as upwards of \$3,033 annually; and

21           WHEREAS, Those students at CCSF who receive some form of financial aid from  
22 federal or state sources still face rising educational costs that result in significant economic  
23 hardship, partly due to the living costs in San Francisco, which has been named one of the  
24 most expensive cities in the U.S. by multiple sources, including The Council for Community  
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1 and Economic Research in a 2016 report, and are forced to choose between purchasing  
2 textbooks or groceries, between paying enrollment fees and paying rent; and

3 WHEREAS, San Francisco has the responsibility and the ability to make the city more  
4 livable for its residents and workers, and can alleviate the need for low income students to  
5 make these choices; and

6 WHEREAS, Free City College's objective is to reclaim free public higher education by  
7 eliminating enrollment fees for all CCSF students who live in San Francisco or work at least  
8 half-time in San Francisco, and ensuring CCSF is accessible by supporting students whose  
9 tuition is already covered by financial aid with support to offset educational costs such as  
10 textbooks and transportation up to \$1,000 per year; now, therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors shall support the Free City College  
12 proposal detailed herein to make City College of San Francisco free and accessible for, at  
13 minimum, all San Francisco residents by securing the funding needed to effect the proposal in  
14 time for Fall 2017 enrollment, estimated to be up to \$13,000,000 for a full year of Free City  
15 College; and, be it

16 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the funding allocated for this purpose shall be contingent  
17 upon new revenue in the City's General Fund that is above projected estimates for  
18 FY2016-2017 to be found in sources such as the City's real estate transfer tax.

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