

1 [Resolution supporting the right of women to breastfeed in public]

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5 WHEREAS, Long-term breastfeeding has been proven to significantly decrease the
6 incidence and severity of a vast array of infectious diseases, reduce the rates of sudden infant
7 death syndrome in the first year of life, and has been associated with slightly enhanced
8 performance on tests of cognitive ability; and

9 WHEREAS, Breastfeeding has also been proven to have significant benefits for
10 mothers, such as earlier return to pre-pregnancy weight, decreased risk of breast cancer,
11 decreased risk of ovarian cancer, and possibly decreased risk of hip fractures and
12 osteoporosis; and,

13 WHEREAS, The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that women feed their
14 babies only breast milk for the first six months and continue breastfeeding for at least another
15 six months; and,

16 WHEREAS, If general recommendations of length of time to breastfeed were followed,
17 there are estimates that Americans would save \$3.6 billion in annual health care costs
18 because breast-fed babies often require less medical care; and

19 WHEREAS, California Civil Code 43.3 states that “Notwithstanding any other provision
20 of law a mother may breastfeed her child in any location, public or private, except the private
21 home or residence of another, where the mother and the child are otherwise authorized to be
22 present”; and

23 WHEREAS, A negative statement in regards to breastfeeding in public expressed by
24 Barbara Walters influenced activists to strengthen protests and launch more nation-wide
25 “nurse-ins” at various establishments; and

1 WHEREAS, Less than one third of women are nursing after six months, which some
2 doctors credit to embarrassment and the difficulties of finding spaces where nursing seems
3 acceptable; and

4 WHEREAS, Creating a negative or embarrassing image of breastfeeding discourages
5 women from breastfeeding and thus reduces the positive externalities resulting from longer
6 term breastfeeding; and

7 WHEREAS, Research from the FDA shows that the degree of embarrassment a
8 mother feels about breast-feeding plays a bigger role in determining whether she is likely to
9 do so than household income, length of maternity leave or employment status; now,
10 therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors supports the right of
12 women to breastfeed in public.

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