

1 [Drug Conviction/Financial Aid Resolution]

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Resolution urging San Francisco Congressional representatives to overturn the provision of the Higher Education Act of 1998 that denies or delays access to financial aid for persons convicted for drug-related offenses.

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WHEREAS, A provision in the Higher Education Act of 1998 mandates that students convicted of any drug- related offense (without regard to the nature of the offense or the offender) be denied eligibility for financial aid for periods ranging from one year to “indefinite;” and

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WHEREAS, No other class of offender (including those convicted of rape or other violent offenses) faces similar restriction on student loan eligibility; and,

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WHEREAS, This provision will, by its very nature, impact primarily students of low to moderate economic means; and,

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WHEREAS, This provision will also have a discriminatory impact on people of color, as their communities are disproportionately targeted for enforcement of the drug laws (e.g. African Americans, who comprise 12% of the nation’s population and 13% of drug users, make up 55% of those convicted of drug offenses); and,

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WHEREAS, To the extent that the federal government involves itself in education, it should be focused on making it easier, not more difficult, for citizens to educate themselves; and,

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WHEREAS, Education is a factor in allowing people to have greater opportunities in life and prevent their involvement in drug related crime; now therefore be it

1 RESOLVED, that the San Francisco Board of Supervisors urges Congressional
2 representatives of San Francisco to overturn the section of the Higher Education Act of 1998
3 that denies or delays access to financial aid based upon convictions for drug-related
4 offenses.

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