

1 [Commemorative Street Plaque - Judith Heumann - United Nations Plaza]

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3 **Resolution authorizing the placement of a commemorative plaque or statuary in United**  
4 **Nations Plaza in memory of Judith Heumann; directing the Department of Public Works**  
5 **to carry out the installation of the aforementioned plaque or statuary.**

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7 WHEREAS, Judy Heumann passed away at age 75 on May 4th, 2022, at her home in  
8 Washington DC, and

9 WHEREAS, Judy Heumann was a disabled person who devoted her life to disability rights  
10 advocacy and was a friend and mentor to countless other disabled people around the country and the  
11 world, and

12 WHEREAS, Judy Heumann served as the Assistant Secretary of Education for Special  
13 Education and Rehabilitative Services under President Bill Clinton from 1993 to 2001, and the  
14 first Special Advisor for International Disability Rights, appointed by President Barack Obama  
15 in 2010, and

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17 WHEREAS, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, is American legislation that  
18 guarantees disability access in all programs receiving federal funding . It was one of the first U.S.  
19 federal civil rights laws offering protection for people with disabilities. It set precedents for  
20 subsequent legislation for people with disabilities, including the Virginians with Disabilities Act  
21 in 1985 and the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990.

22 WHEREAS, The 504 Sit-in was a disability rights protest that began April 5, 1977, in  
23 Federal Buildings in multiple cities around the US, including San Francisco, by people with  
24 disabilities in order to push the issuance of long-delayed regulations regarding Section 504 of  
25 the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and

1           WHEREAS, The protest was organized in part by Judy Heumann, who was a lifelong  
2 civil rights advocate for people with disabilities whose work produced significant contributions  
3 to the development of human rights legislation and policies benefiting children and adults with  
4 disabilities, anWHEREAS, The protest and 504 Sit-in at the Federal Building at 50 United  
5 Nations Plaza were significant because they achieved the goal of prompting the Federal  
6 government to issue the long awaited regulations to guarantee access and civil rights to  
7 people with disabilities, and

8           WHEREAS, San Francisco Mayor Moscone provided support and encouragement to  
9 the protest, successfully intervening with the federal government to prevent the removal of the  
10 protesters, and

11           WHEREAS, The most successful sit-in occurred in San Francisco at 50 United Nations  
12 Plaza, at the Federal Building, planned in part by Judith Heumann, Kitty Cone, and Mary Jane  
13 Owen, lasted until May 4, 1977, a total of 26 days, with more than 150 people, including 120  
14 disability rights activists, ASL interpreters, personal care attendants, and other allies refusing to  
15 leave, making it the longest sit-in at a federal building to date, and

16           WHEREAS, The protesters who occupied the fourth floor of the Federal building at 50  
17 United Nations Plaza were primarily young and diverse, including mostly disabled people of  
18 color, and led by women, with queer women playing an especially prominent role, and

19           WHEREAS, The Black Panther Party arrived to deliver food to the protesters who  
20 organized the community occupation of the building, despite the FBI attempting to stop them,  
21 unsuccessfully from delivering hot meals, and Glide Memorial Church and several other  
22 community organizations delivered blankets and other supplies, and

23           WHEREAS, Prior to the enactment in 1990 of the Americans with Disabilities Act ,  
24 Section 504 was the most important disability rights legislation in the US, and

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1           WHEREAS, Before the passage of Section 504, disability was viewed under the law as  
2 a personal deficit and responsibility, and

3           WHEREAS, Before the passage of Section 504, the American legal framework enabled  
4 the treatment of people with disabilities as second-class citizens, and systematically excluded  
5 them from fully participating in society, and

6           WHEREAS, The passage of Section 504 marked a recognition that progress was  
7 needed in recognizing the civil rights of people with disabilities, and

8           WHEREAS, Early versions of the Act were opposed and eventually vetoed by  
9 President Richard Nixon in October 1972 and March 1973, and

10          WHEREAS, From the passage of the Rehabilitation Act in 1973 to 1977, there were no  
11 published regulations, despite protests, and pressure from disabled American activists and  
12 their allies, who filed a successful lawsuit to compel the Federal government to issue the  
13 regulations,

14          WHEREAS, Disability in Action activists, led by Judith Heumann, staged a sit in on  
15 Madison Ave., New York, protesters from Paralyzed Veterans of America, the National  
16 Paraplegia Foundation, and others staged demonstrations in Washington DC, and

17          WHEREAS, The regulations were finally issued and signed on April 28, 1977; now,  
18 therefore, be it

19          RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors, in accordance with Public Works Code,  
20 Section 789, et seq., the Commemorative Street Plaque Ordinance, authorizes the placement  
21 of plaques on the sidewalk at United Nations Plaza and, be it

22          FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors hereby urges Public Works to  
23 waive all costs associated with permits and the installation of the commemorative plaque;  
24 and, be it

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1           FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors directs Public Works to take all  
2 actions necessary to implement the intent of this Resolution, including approval of the  
3 installation of the aforementioned plaque; and, be it

4           FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors directs Public Works to  
5 add aforementioned plaque at the aforementioned location on the City's official list of  
6 commemorative sites effective immediately from the date of passage of this Resolution; and,  
7 be it

8           FURTHER RESOLVED, That Judith Heumann is hereby recognized by the San  
9 Francisco Board of Supervisors for her significant contributions both nationally and  
10 internationally to the Civil Rights and Disability Community.

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