

1 [Comprehensive Immigration Reform Including Same-Sex Couples]

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3 **Resolution urging Congress to pass an inclusive comprehensive immigration reform**
4 **that includes all families, including same-sex couples.**

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7 WHEREAS, Every American is entitled to equal protection under the law; and

8 WHEREAS, A driving goal under U.S. immigration law is family unification and the
9 ability of families and individuals to reside legally in the U.S., engaging fully in our country's
10 rich civil traditions and form of government; and

11 WHEREAS, Federal law does not currently recognize permanent same-sex partners
12 for immigration purposes; and

13 WHEREAS, The City and County of San Francisco celebrates and respects all
14 immigrant groups and all families, including those of LGBT families; and

15 WHEREAS, Current U.S. immigration law discriminates against a U.S. citizen or lawful
16 permanent resident and his or her foreign-born partner, by not allowing the sponsorship of the
17 foreign partner to apply for immigration benefits, although an opposite-sex couple would have
18 the right to do so; and

19 WHEREAS, This form of discrimination and unfair treatment under the law has
20 devastating and life-altering consequences for same-sex couples; and

21 WHEREAS, The inability to sponsor a same-sex partner leaves the couple with the
22 following limited options: 1) choose to remain in a costly long-distance international
23 relationship; 2) choose to live abroad in the foreign partner's country, if allowable; 3) seek a
24 visa, independent of the partnership, for the foreign-born partner, creating a limited duration of
25 legal stay; 4) choose to allow the foreign-born partner to remain undocumented or allow a visa

1 to lapse, creating daily uncertainty and fear of deportation; or 5) terminate the relationship;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, The limited legal options for same-sex partners to keep their relationship
4 unified exacts an enormous emotional, financial, and mental toll, disproportionate to opposite
5 sex couples in bi-national relationships; and

6 WHEREAS, It is estimated that some 40,000 LGBT American citizens are in same-sex
7 bi-national relationships and are affected by lack of rights and protections of their relationships
8 at the federal level; and

9 WHEREAS, Beyond the personal challenges to same-sex couples, the City and County
10 of San Francisco, and the entire country, risks a great loss of talent should the foreign partner
11 and/or the U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident be forced to depart the U.S. to keep the
12 relationship whole in another country; and

13 WHEREAS, Currently pending in the U.S. Congress is the “Uniting American Families
14 Act” (H.R.519/S.296) reintroduced on February 5, 2013 by Representative Jerrold Nadler (D-
15 NY) and on February 13, 2013 by Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) with bipartisan support; and

16 WHEREAS, The bills call for simply amending existing U.S. immigration law by adding
17 three words – “or permanent partner” – wherever the word “spouse” appears; and

18 WHEREAS, Congress and President Obama want to fix the broken immigration system
19 by enacting Comprehensive Immigration Reform; and

20 WHEREAS, President Obama’s framework for Comprehensive Immigration Reform
21 includes language from the Uniting American Families Act and ALL Families; now, therefore,
22 be it

23 RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors hereby expresses its
24 support for Congress to enact the passage of a Comprehensive immigration Reform bill that
25 will include the language of the Uniting America Families Act and ALL Families; and, be it

1 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors hereby directs
2 the Clerk of the Board to send a copy of this resolution to the San Francisco Congressional
3 delegation, United States Senator Dianne Feinstein, United States Senator Barbara Boxer,
4 Senate Judiciary Committee Chair Senator Patrick Leahy, House Judiciary Chair
5 Representative Goodlatte, Ranking Member Representative John Conyers, Jr, and to bill
6 sponsor Representative Jerrold Nadler (D-NY).

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