

1 [Endorsing the 2013 Annual Language Access Ordinance Compliance Report]

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3 **Resolution endorsing "Advancing Language Access in San Francisco: Language**
4 **Access Ordinance Annual Compliance Summary Report, March 2013," issued by the**
5 **Office of Civic Engagement and Immigrant Affairs.**

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7 WHEREAS, Language access is a civil right affirmed at every level of government,
8 including the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the U.S. Supreme Court ruling on Lau v. Nichols in
9 1974; and

10 WHEREAS, Language access is an essential key to full and meaningful participation in
11 a democracy for many immigrant and newcomer communities; and

12 WHEREAS, San Francisco is one of the most culturally rich and linguistically diverse
13 cities in the nation with over a third of the population immigrant and nearly half speaking a
14 language other than English at home; and

15 WHEREAS, The San Francisco Board of Supervisors views the City's language
16 diversity as a competitive advantage in a global economy; and

17 WHEREAS, The San Francisco Board of Supervisors enacted the Equal Access to
18 Services Ordinance in 2001, amended it in 2009 as the Language Access Ordinance (LAO),
19 and has continued to provide leadership on language access; and

20 WHEREAS, The LAO is one of the strongest language access laws in the nation,
21 demonstrating San Francisco's ongoing commitment to equal and full access to services and
22 timely information; and

23 WHEREAS, The Office of Civic Engagement & Immigrant Affairs (OCEIA) is charged
24 with monitoring citywide compliance and has ensured that the LAO is implemented with the
25 highest level of integrity; and

1 WHEREAS, The report includes community input, fact-based findings, and concrete
2 recommendations on strengthening LAO efficacy and better serving Limited English Proficient
3 (LEP) residents; and

4 WHEREAS, While most City departments continue to make progress in compliance
5 and recognize the importance of providing meaningful and timely multilingual access to City
6 programs, services and information, challenges remain for others; and

7 WHEREAS, On March 11, 2013, the San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission
8 voted unanimously to adopt the findings in the 2013 LAO report; and

9 WHEREAS, On July 11, 2013, the Board of Supervisors held a hearing at the
10 Government Audits and Oversight Committee and listened to the findings of the 2013 LAO
11 report from the Office of Civic Engagement & Immigrant Affairs, heard reports from Tier 1 and
12 Tier 2 departments for areas of improvement, and received feedback from community-based
13 organizations to further strengthening the LAO ordinance to provide better language services;
14 now, therefore, be it

15 RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors recognizes and
16 endorses the findings in "Advancing Language Access in San Francisco: Language
17 Access Ordinance Annual Compliance Summary Report, March 2013" and commends the
18 Office of Civic Engagement & Immigrant Affairs for its ongoing work; and, be it

19 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors reaffirms its
20 commitment to improving and increasing the City's capacity to meet the needs of language
21 diverse residents, and encourages City agencies to increase their efforts to provide relevant
22 and meaningful access to public information for all San Francisco residents, regardless of the
23 languages they speak.

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