

1 [Urging the Department of Public Health to Provide Treatment for HIV-related Lipodystrophy  
2 Syndrome and Supporting California Senate Bill 221 (Wiener)]

3 **Resolution calling on the Department of Public Health to provide access to treatment**  
4 **and coverage for HIV-related lipodystrophy syndrome; and supporting California State**  
5 **Senate Bill 221, authored by Senator Wiener, to require insurance providers in**  
6 **California to cover medical treatment for HIV-related lipodystrophy syndrome.**

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8 WHEREAS, San Francisco has long-been internationally recognized as a leader in the  
9 treatment and care of patients with HIV/AIDS; and

10 WHEREAS, The advancement of medical science over the years has significantly  
11 improved the efficacy of HIV treatment, leading to longer, healthier, and more fulfilling lives;  
12 and

13 WHEREAS, Improved treatment options including antiretroviral drug therapy have  
14 made HIV a long-term manageable disease, leaving patients to cope with other associated  
15 diseases, including lipodystrophy syndrome; and

16 WHEREAS, Lipodystrophy syndrome is a disturbance of fat metabolism that involves  
17 the abnormal deposition and distribution of fat in the body, with some areas of the body  
18 missing subcutaneous fat altogether and with other areas suffering large deposits; and

19 WHEREAS, Severe lipodystrophy is also a manifestation of insulin resistance and is  
20 associated with highly elevated triglyceride levels and fatty liver disease; and

21 WHEREAS, Lipodystrophy syndrome creates visible disfiguring and stigmatizing  
22 morphological changes in body shape and appearance, often including a fat pad on the neck  
23 (colloquially called “buffalo hump”), fat accumulation around the front of the neck and under  
24 the chin (colloquially called “horse collar”), increased abdominal girth, and abnormal fat loss in  
25 the nasolabial folds of the face as well as in the limbs; and

1           WHEREAS, In addition to the physical impacts, lipodystrophy also causes severe  
2 psychological harm to people with HIV; and

3           WHEREAS, Although lipodystrophy syndrome is clearly associated with HIV and  
4 inexpensive and effective medical treatments currently exist, insurers routinely deny claims for  
5 treatment on the basis that they are cosmetic and not medically necessary; and

6           WHEREAS, In 2016, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts became the first State in  
7 the nation to require that public and private insurance providers cover medical treatments for  
8 HIV-associated lipodystrophy; and

9           WHEREAS, Most insurance and medical care providers in California, including private  
10 carriers and Medi-Cal, consider HIV-related lipodystrophy as a cosmetic issue and therefore  
11 do not provide coverage for treatment; and

12           WHEREAS, Healthy San Francisco and the San Francisco Health Service System do  
13 not cover, or provide access to treatment, for HIV related lipodystrophy; and

14           WHEREAS, California State Senator Wiener has introduced Senate Bill 221, which  
15 would mandate that treatment for HIV-related lipodystrophy syndrome be covered in California  
16 by both public and private insurance providers; now, therefore, be it

17           RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors, consistent with our shared values of being  
18 a world-leader in the treatment and care of HIV/AIDS patients and for the continued advocacy  
19 on their behalf, strongly urges the Department of Public Health to take the necessary steps to  
20 ensure that patients enrolled in Healthy San Francisco who suffer from HIV-related  
21 lipodystrophy are provided with access to care; and, be it

22           FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors strongly supports California  
23 Senate Bill 221 (Wiener); and, be it

1           FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors requests that the Clerk of the  
2 Board transmit the final approved resolution to the State Legislature and to the Department of  
3 Public Health.

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