

1 [1858 Black Exodus to Victoria, British Columbia]

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3 Resolution expressing profound regret for the 1858 exodus of hundreds of Black residents of  
4 San Francisco to Victoria, British Columbia because of the legalized brutality and injustices  
5 that were visited upon them based upon such legislation as the 1850 Civil Practices Act, that  
6 disqualified Blacks from testifying against whites, the Fugitive Slave Act of 1852 and the  
7 proposed Assembly Bill 339 in 1858 that was "An Act to restrict and prevent the immigration to  
8 and residence in the State of Negroes and mulattos. "

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10 WHEREAS, people of African descent were among the earliest non-native arrivals to  
11 the Bay Area, including several mulatto soldiers among Gaspar de Portola's expedition who  
12 entered in 1770 and, as represented by William Alexander Leidesdorff, were among the  
13 founders and leaders of the State of California and the City of San Francisco; and,

14 WHEREAS, by the mid-1850s residents of African descent had established in San  
15 Francisco a vibrant community of merchants, laborers, clergy and householders who owned  
16 five million dollars worth of property; and,

17 WHEREAS, three African-American churches in San Francisco established over 150  
18 years ago -- First A.M.E. Zion, Third Baptist and Bethel A.M.E. -- played a particularly  
19 significant role in the abolition movement of the 1850's and in the fight for civil rights in  
20 California including the right of testimony in court and the right to vote; and,

21 WHEREAS, beginning in April 1858, hundreds of African-Americans migrated from  
22 California to Victoria on Vancouver Island in British Columbia fleeing legal proscription in  
23 California; and,

1 WHEREAS, the primary mission of the San Francisco African American Historical &  
2 Cultural Society has, since its founding in 1955, been to document, preserve and present the  
3 history and culture of people of African descent in San Francisco and the Bay Area; and,

4 WHEREAS, in 2007, at the urging of the San Francisco African American Historical &  
5 Cultural Society led Committee for the Adoption of a Slavery Disclosure Ordinance, the City  
6 and County of San Francisco adopted a Slavery Era Disclosure Ordinance requiring  
7 businesses with government contracts to disclose any involvement in the Trans-Atlantic slave  
8 trade; and,

9 WHEREAS, more than 7,000 African American have moved out of San Francisco in  
10 recent years, resulting in a decline in the Black population from 13% in 1970 to 7% in 2006;  
11 and,

12 WHEREAS, the City and County of San Francisco remains committed to the notion that  
13 education is the first step towards ameliorating the continuing effects of past injustices.

14 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, The City and County of San Francisco hereby  
15 designates the week of April 20 - 26, 2008 as “ 1858 Black Exodus Commemoration Week,” in  
16 the City and County of San Francisco; and, be it

17 FURTHER RESOLVED, the City and County of San Francisco is shall renew and  
18 expand its support of the San Francisco African American Historical & Cultural Society and  
19 other institutions in their continuing efforts to educate the public about the history of slavery,  
20 its manifestations in California and its continuing impacts.