

1 [Supporting California State Assembly Bill No. 1784 (Santiago, Chiu, and Gonzalez) - Secure
2 the VOTE Act]

3 **Resolution supporting California State Assembly Bill No. 1784, authored by Assembly**
4 **Members Miguel Santiago, David Chiu, and Lorena Gonzalez, with principal co-author**
5 **Senator Scott Wiener, the “Secure the VOTE Act,” to authorize the Secretary of State to**
6 **award up to \$16 million in matching funds, upon appropriation by the Legislature, to**
7 **counties for the development of open-source paper ballot voting systems.**

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9 WHEREAS, In 2019 the U.S. Department of Homeland Security revealed that the
10 Russian government likely targeted election infrastructure in all 50 states in the 2016
11 presidential election; and

12 WHEREAS, Proprietary voting systems lack transparency and have proven vulnerable
13 to security threats, and the 2017 DEF CON Hacking Conference testing current proprietary
14 voting systems concluded that such systems are a “national security threat”, and that “every
15 piece of equipment ... was effectively breached in some manner”; and

16 WHEREAS, Publicly owned open-source paper ballot voting systems would be openly
17 licensed and therefore available for public inspection, allowing for a transparent examination
18 of public code to find possible security flaws and other issues, and allowing claims about
19 security and accuracy to be independently verified; and

20 WHEREAS, The Department of Defense uses open-source for security purposes, and
21 its manual states that “Making source code available to the public significantly aids defenders
22 and not just attackers. Continuous and broad peer-review, enabled by publicly available
23 source code, improves software reliability and security through the identification and
24 elimination of defects that might otherwise go unrecognized by the core development team.”;
25 and

1 WHEREAS, In 2014 the San Francisco Board of Supervisors unanimously voted in
2 favor of a resolution declaring support for open-source voting systems; and

3 WHEREAS, The City and County of San Francisco has already allocated an initial
4 \$1.55 million to the Department of Technology, which is working with the Department of
5 Elections, the Elections Commission, the Mayor’s Office, and other stakeholders to start
6 development of local open-source voting; and

7 WHEREAS, California State Assembly Bill No. 1784, the “Secure the Voter-verified
8 Open-source paper ballot Transparent Elections (VOTE) Act”, authored by Assembly
9 Members Miguel Santiago, David Chiu, and Lorena Gonzalez, with principal co-author
10 Senator Scott Wiener, would authorize the Secretary of State to award up to \$16 million total
11 in matching funds to counties to speed the development, certification, governance, and
12 distribution of open-source paper ballot voting systems that all counties would be able to
13 freely use and modify based on their needs; and

14 WHEREAS, The “Secure the VOTE Act” would provide up to \$8 million in matching
15 funds that San Francisco could use for any open-source voting systems it develops and uses
16 at least on a pilot basis by the November 2024 election, if San Francisco meets all of the
17 following requirements: 1) All of the system’s software developed at least in part using state or
18 county funds pursuant to Section 19504 of AB 1784 must be licensed exclusively under the
19 GNU Affero General Public License 3.0 or later; 2) All of the system’s software components
20 must be open source during development, using a process that is open to public feedback.
21 Development must be carried out in public repositories by January 1, 2021; and 3) All of the
22 system’s software components eligible for an award of matching funds pursuant to this
23 subdivision must be certified or conditionally approved by the Secretary of State, or approved
24 by the Secretary of State as part of a pilot program pursuant to Section 19209, for use during
25 the November 5, 2024, general election; and

1 WHEREAS, The San Francisco Elections Commission unanimously voted to request
2 that San Francisco support the “Secure the VOTE Act”; and

3 WHEREAS, Expeditiously completing the open-source voting system will save San
4 Francisco significant funds by allowing the City to be eligible to receive matching funds for its
5 voting systems, and will give voters more confidence in the security and transparency of vote
6 counting; and

7 WHEREAS, After San Francisco certifies its open-source voting system, every county
8 in the state and nation will be able to use and build on it for free, significantly increasing the
9 confidence in the security and transparency of vote-counting across the country; now,
10 therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco urges the California State
12 Legislature, Secretary of State Alex Padilla, and Governor Gavin Newsom to support and
13 pass California State Assembly Bill No. 1784, the “Secure the VOTE Act”; and, be it

14 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco hereby directs the
15 Clerk of the Board to transmit copies of this Resolution to the California State Legislature, to
16 Secretary of State Alex Padilla, and to the Office of the Governor of California.

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