Resolution supporting and calling for a “New Border Vision” that proposes changes to existing United States border policies in order to expand public safety, protect human rights, and welcome people with dignity at the borders.

WHEREAS, The Board of Supervisors declared San Francisco a City and County of Refuge in 1989, which it built upon and strengthened in 2009, 2013 and 2016, and has passed numerous resolutions affirming respect for human rights and calling for responsible and humane immigration and border policies; and

WHEREAS, The City is made up of a diverse population, and one-third of City residents were born outside of the United States but now form part of the fabric of our communities and contribute to the cultural, social, and economic vibrancy of the City; and

WHEREAS, San Francisco is a border city as it falls within 100 miles of a land or sea border under 8 C.F.R. 287.1, and as such the residents of the City are subject to the “warrantless powers” of Department of Homeland Security (DHS) employees who assert the power under 8 U.S.C. 1357(a)(3) to interrogate our residents, set up checkpoints, and board and search our cars, trains, buses, planes, boats, and other conveyances without needing a warrant or the equivalent of probable cause as is normally required under the U.S. Constitution’s Fourth Amendment and the California Constitution’s Article 1 Section 13; and

WHEREAS, The City also falls within 25 miles of an external boundary of the United States and as such the residents of the City are subject to DHS employees entering onto their private property, but not their dwelling, to patrol the border under 8 U.S.C. 1357(a)(3), which also undermines the constitutional rights of City residents; and
WHEREAS, City residents are subject to profiling by DHS employees because the U.S. Department of Justice’s “Guidance for Federal Law Enforcement Agencies Regarding the Use of Race, Ethnicity, Gender, National Origin, Religion, Sexual Orientation, or Gender Identity” prohibits profiling except in the vicinity of a border, which includes our San Francisco, and this runs counter to California law under the Racial and Identity Profiling Act and Penal Code, Section 13519.4; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Homeland Security announced on February 14, 2020, that it plans to deploy the U.S. Border Patrol Tactical Unit (BORTAC) to Sanctuary Cities, including San Francisco, to assist Immigration and Customs Enforcement with arrests in those cities, a move which numerous civil liberties advocates and elected officials have denounced as retaliatory and cruel; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Homeland Security is made up of multiple agencies who enforce border security in various ways, at physical land borders, at sea and in the interior of the country described as the expansive border region, which includes the City, and agencies consist of U.S. Customs Border Protection (CBP) and its component agency, Border Patrol, but also U.S. Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), the US Coast Guard and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency, among others; and

WHEREAS, San Francisco depends on local, state, and federal laws to protect the natural and cultural heritage of California and address climate change through laws that protect our air quality, water quality, biological diversity, historical sites, sacred places, and other valuable resources, and all of these laws can be waived in their entirety by DHS without judicial review under Real ID Act, Section 102, for the purpose of building border barriers, undermining our well-being and the principle of due process embedded in the US Constitution’s Fifth Amendment; and
WHEREAS, We are less safe, when DHS employees operate with absolute power, and without transparency or accountability, asserting that they are not subject to our laws, which leads to a culture of impunity and high rates of abuse and corruption that endanger the country; and

WHEREAS, The impunity of DHS employees operating in the border region has led to the assault of countless people and the killing of more than 102 people, including citizen and non-citizen women, children, and men since 2010, of which 21 were killed in California and at its borders, and no DHS employee has ever been held accountable; and

WHEREAS, Border deterrence tactics such as walls and other barriers intentionally funnel people into dangerous and remote corridors that has led to the deaths of over 7,000 people since 1994, when Operation Gatekeeper began at the California border, with a current death toll of an estimated 400 men, women, and children a year, which amounts to one person dying every day for the last 25 years as a result of irresponsible policies that use risk to life as a deterrence; and

WHEREAS, Border policies criminalize rather than manage migration, leading to the inhumane treatment of families seeking life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness and have led to the mass incarceration of more than 50,000 migrants, which include 24,177 in California as of 2017; and

WHEREAS, Nearly one million people arrive to the United States every day, around 196,000 people every day via California, and more than 99 percent of them come with prior authorization as citizens, residents, and visa holders, but often face long waits at California’s border because of poor border management despite the government’s allocation of over $13 billion a year to U.S. Customs and Border Protection alone; and

WHEREAS, The United States loses billions of dollars and thousands of jobs every year due to long wait times at our southern border that delay trade and travel, and the cost is
felt across every state, all of which are dependent on trade with Mexico as our largest trading partner; and

WHEREAS, Over 160 countries took an unprecedented action in December 2018 by signing a Global Compact on Migration that calls for the protection of human rights at borders, setting new global standards and best practices for border governance as detailed in the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights “Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights at International Borders”; and

WHEREAS, Current U.S. border policies are out of sync with global best practices and undermine our well-being, and we need our country to change its approach to the border and become a model of good border governance to create humane and functional borders for the 21st century; and

WHEREAS, Border communities in conjunction with human rights experts have drafted a “New Border Vision” that adopts global best practices and relates them to the U.S. borders to expand public safety, protect human rights, and welcome people with dignity at our borders; and

WHEREAS, The “New Border Vision” leads with our values beginning with the belief that migrants are part of the human family and should be treated with dignity and respect; that migration is the exercise of the inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness and as such, migrants should be humanized rather than criminalized; that we should treat all people as we would want to be treated, and give everyone full and fair opportunity to be safe; and

WHEREAS, Expanding public safety in the “New Border Vision” means protecting our communities by ensuring that border agents treat border residents with dignity and respect and are held accountable - the “New Border Vision” calls for the following: decriminalizing migration and limiting border authorities to lawful and legitimate activities as defined by
international human rights standards, and utilizing detection technologies with privacy
protections in place of harmful and ineffective walls, because true public safety depends on
law enforcement respecting rights to equal protection and privacy for all, regardless of
immigration status and country of origin; ensuring that any interaction between local and
federal law enforcement strictly adheres to the standards set forth by local sanctuary policies
so that everyone, including border residents and migrants, feel safe and do not have reason
to fear mistreatment from local law enforcement; respecting human rights without creating
zones of exceptions or impunity, ending mass detention, and providing people who suffer
abuse by border authorities with meaningful access to justice to hold border authorities
accountable; and

WHEREAS, Protecting human rights in the “New Border Vision” means preserving the
dignity of life, rather than intentionally endangering it or treating it as an acceptable collateral
consequence of our policies - the “New Border Vision” calls for the following: prioritizing
human rights at the border and allowing people to seek protection or safe return with the
assistance of our government, rather than prosecution by the government; not turning
migrants seeking protection back into harm’s way; providing immediate aid, rescue, and
recovery to people in distress at the border, and supporting rather than prosecuting
humanitarian aid workers who fill gaps left by the government to save lives; protecting children
by keeping families together, locating them in the community rather than in detention, and
giving child welfare specialists a primary role, not border law enforcement authorities; and

WHEREAS, Welcoming people with dignity in the “New Border Vision” means creating
an efficient, effective, and humane entry system to foster goodwill, but that is challenging at a
militarized border - the “New Border Vision” calls for the following: expanding the channels for
entry with adequate and accountable staff, more lanes at ports, more open hours, and more
opportunities to approach so no one is left waiting for unreasonable amounts of time; setting
the standard for border authorities to conduct welcoming, expeditious, non-threatening,
professional interviews to identify people entering and screening for people who may need
protection; directing border authorities to refer migrants seeking protection to other agencies
or community organizations that are not law enforcement and are better suited to provide
trauma, medical, psychological, legal, language and other assistance in whole-of-government
and whole-of-society approach to humanitarian response; and

WHEREAS, The “New Border Vision” is grounded in good governance principles that
call for evidence-based and data-driven decision-making, consideration of affected
communities including border residents, transparency and oversight, and full accountability
without exceptions, waivers, or zones of immunity; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors recognizes that San Francisco is a border
city, which falls into the zone of border enforcement, as defined in 8 C.F.R. 287.1, and as
such has a particular stake in the border policies that affect our residents as well as our
country; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors condemns the DHS
deployment of BORTAC agents to Sanctuary Cities, including San Francisco, as this attack on
our city is an affront to our values and vision of a society that is inclusive of all residents,
regardless of immigration status; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors supports a “New Border Vision”
that expands public safety, protects human rights, and welcomes people with dignity at the
border since our government should lead with our values, address our needs and adhere to
good governance principles to create humane and well-functioning borders for the 21st
century; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors calls on Congress to eliminate
“powers without warrant” in 8 U.S.C. 1357, which subjects City residents to potential
unreasonable searches by federal authorities, undermining constitutional protections that the City is charged with protecting; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors calls on Congress to end the border-region exception to the prohibitions on profiling, which subjects City residents to potential profiling by federal authorities, undermining California’s protection against profiling which the City is charged with protecting; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors calls on Congress to eliminate the blanket waiver authority in Real ID Section 102, which gives federal authorities absolute and unreviewable authority to waive all local, state, and federal laws to build border barriers, undermining the well-being of City residents, the protection of their natural and cultural heritage in California, and their due process rights; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors calls on Congress to end the criminalization of migrants for simply being migrants by eliminating 8 U.S.C. 1325, which leads to the criminal prosecution and incarceration of people asking for help; instead we should limit the adjudication of migrant cases to civil immigration proceedings to determine what remedies they may be eligible for including asylum; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors shall notify San Francisco’s Federal legislative representatives of the Board’s position of support accordingly.