BE IT KNOWN That the Commission on the Status of Women of the City and County of San Francisco hereby issues and authorizes the execution, by the subscribing Commissioners, of the following commendation:

WHEREAS, this country was built on stolen lands and by people stolen from their homeland and the City and County of San Francisco sits on the occupied land of the Ohlone peoples; the exploitation and destruction of Indigenous and Black peoples’ land and bodies and the erasure of their cultures enriched white settlers and colonizers, whose wealth has been passed down through generations of white Americans; for Indigenous women and Black women, sexual violence was an added harm, enslaved women were also seen as a way to produce more Black bodies and used in medical experiments amplifying the pain of slavery; and,

WHEREAS, the racial injustice and violence against Black, Indigenous, and other people of color of the past are not just history but continue to the present; racism has been codified through exclusionary laws, policies, and practices, such as Jim Crow and the Chinese Exclusion Act, that have perpetuated disparities between people of color and white people; Black and African American, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, and other women of color continue to face greater political, social, economic, education, and health discrimination and disparities compared to white women; and,

WHEREAS, domestic violence occurs in all communities yet disproportionately affects women of color, who may also face greater barriers in accessing help and services; in San Francisco in Fiscal Year 2018-2019, Black victims comprised 30% of domestic violence incidents reported to police despite being just 5% of the population while violence against Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander, and Indigenous women is often underreported; and,
WHEREAS, women of color face greater workplace discrimination and harassment, are concentrated in undervalued occupations, and are frequently paid less for doing the same job as their white counterparts leading to lifelong economic inequities, retirement insecurity, and wealth gaps; the gender wage gap in San Francisco in 2017 was 42% for Asian women, 47% for Pacific Islander women, 55% for Black women, 58% for Latinx women, and 63% for Native American women compared to 22% for white women; one-third of women living in poverty in San Francisco were Black and 23% were Pacific Islander in 2017; and

WHEREAS, access to quality and affordable health care and greater rates of heart disease, cancer, and other health conditions disproportionally affect women of color; in San Francisco about half of maternal deaths were among Black families despite being just 4% of births each year, food insecurity among pregnant people affected 27% of Latinx, 20% of Black, and 7% of Asian individuals, and the life expectancy for Black and Pacific Islander women in San Francisco is ten years less than an average woman (76 compared to 86 years); and,

WHEREAS, the current Coronavirus pandemic and health, economic, caregiving, and climate crises have exposed and exacerbated disparities facing women of color; the Latinx community comprises 50% of cases and more than one-quarter of the COVID-19 deaths in San Francisco while Asians are more than one-third of deaths from COVID-19 and Anti-Asian sentiment and violence has recently grown; nearly one-quarter of Black and Latinx women in California lost their jobs this spring, women of color also make up a majority of many of the front-line essential jobs, like cashiers, cleaners, nurses, and caregivers, that face greater exposure to infection; and,

WHEREAS, the ongoing movement for Black lives and the recent civil actions and protests to demand an end to white supremacy and violence against Black and brown bodies have highlighted the responsibility of everyone to be actively anti-racist; and,

WHEREAS, the Commission and Department were born out of the women’s movement in the 1960s and 70s, which had a history of prioritizing issues of white, middle and upper class women, and discriminating against women of color, women with disabilities, immigrant women, lesbian women, and transgender women, and perpetuating white supremacy and racial injustice; and
WHEREAS, the first wave of the women’s movement in the United States was sparked through the activism of women in the abolitionist movement, strengthened through former enslaved African American leaders such as Sojourner Truth and Frederick Douglass and included women of all races, yet became not only focused on white women but used racial divisions to motivate the cause of women’s suffrage; and,

WHEREAS, feminists of color have always existed within and outside of the American mainstream women’s movement and as leaders in movements for civil rights, workers’ rights, disability rights, LGBTQ rights, immigrant rights, and the environment; intersectionality is a central tenet of modern feminism, a guiding principle of the Commission and Department, and essential to advancing the rights and opportunities of all women by dismantling the systems of oppression that are interconnected with sexism; and

WHEREAS, San Francisco’s ordinance implementing the principles of the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) passed in 1998 was updated in 2000 to emphasize the intersecting discrimination of race and gender, expand the collection of data by gender, race, and other characteristics, and recognize the unique experiences of women of color; the Department’s gender analyses conducted under this ordinance consistently assess equity by race and gender combined identifying disparities for men of color as well; and the Department’s biennial reports monitoring diversity in appointees to City commissions and boards have informed officials of representation gaps for Latinx and Asian individuals and women of color; and,

WHEREAS, the Department’s Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Intervention Grants provide essential services to support survivors of all races and cultural backgrounds, in Fiscal Year 2019-2020 the grants program served 14,501 individuals affected by domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking; of those clients for whom race and ethnicity was known, 30% were Black alone or with another race, 24% were Native American alone or with another race, 22% were Latinx, and 22% were Asian alone or with another race; and,
WHEREAS, the Department’s leadership in the San Francisco Safety Opportunity Lifelong Relationship (SF SOL) Collaborative directly addresses some of the most basic human rights needs of Black and brown girls in San Francisco by reimagining the current foster care system, creating a continuum of care for youth involved in commercial sexual exploitation, and developing safe and supportive housing placements; Black youth in San Francisco are disproportionately involved in the foster care system and at risk of sexual exploitation, in 2018 46% of San Francisco's foster youth were Black despite comprising 5% of the youth population and in April 2020 Family and Children's Services found that 58% of the San Francisco foster youth involved in commercial sexual exploitation were Black and 94% of these youth were girls; and,

WHEREAS, San Francisco and other cities across the nation are part of a movement to eliminate institutional racism; in 2017 the Department joined a cohort with the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE), a national network dedicated to achieving racial equity and advancing opportunities for all through providing training, tools, and support to build the Department’s organizational capacity to advance racial equity in its programs, policies, and services; Department staff continued to participate in this work through the Citywide Racial Equity Working (CREW) group to share best practices, normalize conversations, and impact Citywide issues of racial equity; and,

WHEREAS, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors passed Ordinance Number 188-19 on July 11, 2019 amending the Administrative Code to create an Office of Racial Equity as a Division of the Human Rights Commission, with authority to create a citywide Racial Equity Framework, analyze the impact of Board ordinances on racial equity, and create a racial reconciliation process; requiring City departments to designate employees as racial equity leaders, create Racial Equity Action Plans, and to provide annual updates on such Plans; and requiring the Department of Human Resources to produce an annual report concerning racial equity in the City workforce; and,

WHEREAS, the Office of Racial Equity defines racial equity as a set of social justice practices, rooted in a solid understanding and analysis of historical and present-day oppression, aiming towards a world where race is no longer a factor in the distribution of opportunity, through involving those most impacted by the structural racial inequities in the creation and implementation of the institutional policies and practices that impact their lives;
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED That the San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women condemns racism and all forms of discrimination; stands in solidarity with those who feel unsafe, targeted, unseen, and unheard, especially Black people, Indigenous people, and other people of color; and expresses its commitment to racial equity; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Commission supports the Department’s efforts to develop an action plan that examines internal and external operations to advance racial equity across all of its work, addresses racial and social inequities for women and girls, and aligns with the Office of Racial Equity framework to dismantle structural and institutional racism.

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San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women
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