

1 [Recommending Against the Issuance of Taser Devices to San Francisco Police Department Officers]  
 2 **Resolution recommending that the Mayor, the Board of Supervisors and the San Francisco**  
 3 **Police Department not acquire taser devices for police officers.**

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 5 WHEREAS, As per Charter SEC. 4.124, the Youth Commission is committed to identifying and  
 6 proposing solutions to meet the “unmet needs” of the youth population in San Francisco, and ensuring  
 7 that our local law enforcement institutions employ a dignified and rehabilitative approach in treating the  
 8 city’s justice involved youth; and

9 WHEREAS, Though Taser devices have been advertised as decreasing the number of  
 10 shooting deaths and officer injuries, a 2009 UCSF research study showed a six-fold increase in the  
 11 rate of sudden deaths in the first year that California law enforce agencies deployed the use of stun  
 12 guns and no change in officer injuries following Taser deployment;<sup>1</sup> and

13 WHEREAS, Based on data collected by Amnesty International , at least 500 people in the  
 14 United States have died since 2001 after being shocked with Tasers either during their arrest or while  
 15 in jail. The largest number of deaths following the use of Tasers was in California with 92 reported  
 16 deaths;<sup>2</sup> and

17 WHEREAS: From January 2009 to January 2013 there were 184 taser-related deaths by law  
 18 enforcement in the United States, and among these, 11% were youth and young adults 24 years old  
 19 and below;<sup>3</sup> and

20 WHEREAS, The San Francisco Police Department has previously adopted a Crisis  
 21 Intervention Team (CIT) model which outlines and prioritizes non-lethal, de-escalation based  
 22 strategies in its policing, particularly of people with mental illnesses; and

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24 <sup>1</sup> <http://www.ucsf.edu/news/2009/01/4188/first-study-test-real-world-effects-stun-gun-use-raises-questions-abo>

25 <sup>2</sup> <http://www.amnestyusa.org/news/press-releases/amnesty-international-urges-stricter-limits-on-police-taser-use-as-us-death-toll-reaches-500>

<sup>3</sup> <http://electronicvillage.blogspot.com/2009/05/taser-related-deaths-in-united-states.html>

1           WHEREAS, The San Francisco Police Commission mandated the full implementation of the  
 2 Crisis Intervention Team program over a year ago and to date, only three of the eight CIT trainings  
 3 approved by the Commission have been completed; and

4           WHEREAS, The San Francisco Youth Commission would feel a profound concern over the  
 5 safety of youth in mental health crisis and psychiatric distress if CIT (Crisis Intervention Team) officers  
 6 proceed to be armed with Tasers; and

7           WHEREAS, Homeless youth disproportionately suffer from significant mental health issues  
 8 including depression, anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, in addition to alcohol and  
 9 substance abuse; and

10           WHEREAS, San Francisco’s homeless youth, particularly in the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood,  
 11 have experienced an increase in policing with the passage of the No-Sit/Lie Ordinance in 2011, putting  
 12 them at greater risk of being tasered by CIT officers if found in compliance or defiant of this law;<sup>4</sup> and

13           WHEREAS, Eight out of 10 times when police draw Tasers, they are drawn against people with  
 14 mental health problems, and people with mental health problems are much more likely to come into  
 15 conflict with the police when community mental healthcare is underfunded;<sup>5</sup> now, therefore, be it

16           RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission urges the Board of Supervisors to  
 17 urge the San Francisco Police Department and Police Chief Greg Suhr to fully implement the Crisis  
 18 Intervention Team Model; and be it further

19           RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission urges the San Francisco Police  
 20 Department and Police Chief Greg Suhr to identify practical tools and alternative practices other than  
 21 Tasers that apply non-lethal tactics for de-escalation; and be it finally

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25 <sup>4</sup> <http://www.safehorizon.org/index/what-we-do-2/helping-youth-14/streetwork-homeless-youth-facts-220.html>  
<sup>5</sup> <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/taser-use-on-mentally-ill-questioned-20110413-1deax.html>

1           RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission urges the San Francisco Police  
2 Department and Police Chief Greg Suhr demonstrate leadership in changing the culture and practices  
3 of treating mentally ill, homeless, and people in psychiatric distress.

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