Resolution recognizing March 2020 as Problem Gambling Awareness Month in the City and County of San Francisco, urging the Board of Education to create and implement a problem gambling curriculum into health classes citywide, and making appropriate recommendations to the Department of Public Health, the Board Of Supervisors, and the Mayor.

WHEREAS, This resolution makes reference to the San Francisco Board of Supervisor’s prior resolution relating to problem gambling on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. 180273, which is hereby declared to be a part of this resolution as if set forth fully herein; and

WHEREAS, Gambling, in both legal and illegal forms, is becoming more omnipresent in our everyday lives, including through Daily Fantasy Sports, internet casinos, social media games, sports betting, and sweepstakes cafes; and

WHEREAS, In 2016 Americans lost nearly $117 billion at casinos, more than any other country; and

WHEREAS, Six to eight million Americans, including more than 1.2 million Californians, meet the criteria for problem gambling and, by their gambling behavior, negatively affect the lives of another 48 to 80 million individuals; and

WHEREAS, Problem gambling is defined as gambling behavior which causes disruption in any major areas of life: psychological, physical, social, vocational, health, spiritual or emotional; and
WHEREAS, Problem gambling (also known as "gambling disorder") has been classified by the American Psychiatric Association as an addiction with similarities to the causes and consequences of alcohol and drug dependence; and

WHEREAS, Pathological problem gambling is recognized as a mental health disorder; and

WHEREAS, Behavioral signs of problem gambling include gambling to escape boredom, pain or loneliness, lying to loved ones to conceal the extent of gambling, needing to gamble with increasing amounts of money in order to achieve excitement, borrowing money to gamble, and trying repeatedly overtime to win back money lost; and

WHEREAS, Americans gamble more money each year than they spend on groceries, betting upwards of $900 billion annually; and

WHEREAS, Problem gambling is a public health issue impacting relationships, families, businesses, and communities; and

WHEREAS, In the Asian American community, problem gambling has been linked to domestic violence, divorce, child neglect, fraud, theft, and other social ills; and

WHEREAS, The estimated national social cost to families and communities due to bankruptcy, divorce, job loss, home loss, and criminal justice costs associated with problem gambling is $6.7 billion each year; and

WHEREAS, Compared to the national rate of two to three percent problem gamblers, gambling addiction rates in Asian communities range from six percent to nearly sixty percent; and

WHEREAS, Populations at high risk for gambling problems includes seniors, youth, college students, veterans, African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinx/Hispanics, and Native Americans; and
WHEREAS, High school students have twice the rate of gambling problems as adults, with four to seven percent of teens nationwide displaying pathological gambling problems; and

WHEREAS, Problem gambling among Asian Pacific Islander San Francisco youth is eleven percent, which is higher than the two to six percent national average of problem gambling amongst teens; and

WHEREAS, Asian youth are most disproportionately impacted by problem gambling, which perpetuates a cycle of poverty and economic inequality; and

WHEREAS, A 2006 survey titled San Francisco Asian Youth Gambling Study conducted by the Chinese Health Coalition of North East Medical Services, Chinese Community Health Care Association, Chinese Hospital, On-Lok Lifeways, and Self-Help for the Elderly (NICOS) found that of 246 Asian students from three different San Francisco high schools, the pathological gambling rate was 10.9%, which is much higher than the national rate of two to five percent youth who are considered pathological gamblers; and

WHEREAS, A majority of the teens who participated in the survey revealed that they learned to gamble from their friends, parents, or relatives; and

WHEREAS, This high rate of gambling addictions among Asian youth is a result of a generational tax and generational trauma, which results in psychological trauma and financial debt that lasts through generations; and

WHEREAS, Having a gambling addiction not only affects the addict, but it also has a significant impact on the individual’s family and community; and

WHEREAS, Problem gamblers tend to have higher rates of depression, increased financial debts, and more strained relationships; and

WHEREAS, Only 15% of problem gamblers ever seek treatment; and

WHEREAS, Numerous free resources, including self-help workbooks, phone-based counseling, individual counseling, support group counseling, residential care and a locally
based helpline (1-888-968-7888) are available for problem gamblers and affected individuals; and

WHEREAS, 2020 marks the 16th consecutive year of a National Problem Gambling Awareness Month according to the National Council on Problem Gambling; and

WHEREAS, The San Francisco Department of Public Health - Community Behavioral Health Services (SFDPH-CBHS), in partnership with NICOS, made the City and County of San Francisco one of the first municipalities in the nation to offer a problem gambling prevention program to its residents, beginning in 1998; and

WHEREAS, The NICOS problem gambling program model has been replicated nationwide; and

WHEREAS, Since 2014, the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco has unanimously adopted a resolution annually declaring the month of March as Problem Gambling Awareness Month; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission recognizes the outreach efforts by SFDPH-CBHS, NICOS, Youth Leadership Institute, and Richmond Area Multi-Services, Inc to help communities struggling with problem gambling; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission will continue to support outreach, education, and treatment programs for youth problem gamblers, in addition to strengthening prevention strategies; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission urges the Board of Education to create and implement a problem gambling curriculum in San Francisco Unified School District health classes to educate students about the harms of problem gambling; and,

be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission urges the Department of Public Health to work with existing organizations to create and strengthen
youth-specific, culturally and linguistically appropriate programs, and to ensure that these
resources are accessible to youth like those in the Asian immigrant community; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission urges the Board of
Supervisors and Mayor to increase outreach programs in their respective districts to raise
awareness about problem gambling and its consequences, and to continue supporting the
efforts of organizations working to tackle problem gambling; and, be it

FINALLY RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission recognizes the
month of March 2020 as Problem Gambling Awareness Month in the City and County of San
Francisco.

Josephine Cureton, Chair
Adopted on March 2, 2020
2019-2020 San Francisco Youth Commission