Resolution urging the City and County of San Francisco to take action on anti-Asian hate crimes and invest in multiracial community health and safety.

WHEREAS, Racial discrimination and violence are pervasive and persisting challenges for San Francisco and society as a whole, rooted deeply at an interpersonal and institutional level; and

WHEREAS, Combatting racism requires active resistance at both the community organizing and legislative levels; and

WHEREAS, Anti-Asian sentiment did not start with the COVID-19 pandemic, but rather has been exacerbated and increased in these circumstances; and

WHEREAS, The existence of anti-Asian legislation and anti-Asian sentiment from government leaders has been historically prevalent in the United States from the Chinese Exclusion Act in the 1880s to Japanese Internment in the mid-1900s and leaders calling the COVID-19 virus a “Chinese virus” today; and

WHEREAS, In 1982, Vincent Chin, a 27-year-old Chinese-American man, was murdered in Detroit by two white men, who both received no prison time, demonstrating the institutional racism rooted in our criminal justice system; and

WHEREAS, In the 1960s, Asian-American students rallied alongside Black student organizers and other Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (“BIPOC”) as part of the Third World Liberation Front to fight for equal education opportunities and ethnic studies at UC Berkeley and San Francisco State University; and
WHEREAS, Asian-American activists like Yuri Kochiyama and Grace Lee Boggs fought for Black social justice movements and pulled insights from Black radical frameworks for Asian liberation; and

WHEREAS, San Francisco has a large Asian population at 34.4% compared to 5.9% nationally; and

WHEREAS, Asian restaurants and businesses especially in Chinatowns have been disproportionately affected by the economic downturn of the pandemic due to stigmatization, with 22% of all small business-owner activity declining from February to April 2020, but 26% of Asian-American small business-owner activity declining according to the National Bureau of Economic Research; and

WHEREAS, According to the San Francisco Police Department’s (“SFPD”) definition, a hate crime is a “criminal act or attempted criminal act”, based on the victim’s “actual or perceived race, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or gender”; and

WHEREAS, There have been 2,583 reports of anti-Asian incidents throughout 47 states across the United States exclusively from March 2020 to May 2020, with California reporting 46% of the incidents, according to Stop AAPI Hate, a nationwide reporting center on anti-Asian crime and discrimination; and

WHEREAS, There have been more than 3,000 hate incidents around the United States reported on the Asian Americans Advancing Justice self-reporting system since late April 2020; and

WHEREAS, Last year, violent incidents towards Asian-Americans include but are not limited to Jonathan Mok, a 23-year-old Singaporean student who was beat up in London, a 39-year-old Asian woman splashed with acid in New York, and an elderly Asian man attacked while collecting cans in San Francisco; and
WHEREAS, Recent acts of violence towards Asian-Americans and elderly Asian-Americans, many of which are in the Bay Area, include but are not limited to the murder of Vicha Ratanapakdee, 84-year-old Thai man, in San Francisco, attacks on 3 elderly people alongside 20 other instances in Oakland’s Chinatown within one week, assault and robbery of a 64-year-old Vietnamese grandmother in San Jose, and slashing of Noel Quintana, a 61-year-old Filipino man, in New York City; and

WHEREAS, There have been numerous acts of hostility and vandalism towards symbolic monuments for Asian communities such as San Jose’s Japantown granite monument, Lunar New Year statue in downtown San Francisco, and cherry blossom trees in San Francisco’s Japantown; and

WHEREAS, Violence towards Asian-Americans and other BIPOC communities has been upheld and exacerbated by law enforcement, as demonstrated with how Christian Hall, a 19-year-old Chinese-American male, was fatally shot by Pennsylvania State Police seven times after they were called to assist him with a mental health crisis in December 2020; and

WHEREAS, Asian hate crimes in Bay Area and nationally have incited fear, stress, and anxiety for Asian-Americans particularly in the time around Lunar New Year, a time of celebration and reunion; and

WHEREAS, Over 70 Asian organizations across the Bay Area joined together to demand San Francisco, Oakland, and Bay Area leadership to take action condemning and preventing violence towards Asian community members and made clear that an over-reliance on law enforcement approaches has largely been ineffective and has been disproportionately harmful to Black communities and other communities of color; and

WHEREAS, Cities like New York and Alameda have established anti-Asian hate crime task forces in response to the increase in anti-Asian crime; and
WHEREAS, Mayor Breed and Ivy Lee, Criminal Justice Policy Advisor, claimed they were in discussion with Assemblymember David Chiu and the SFPD to implement an Asian hate crime task force back in September 2020; and

WHEREAS, One in seven (14%) of those who reported anti-Asian crime and discrimination to Stop AAPI Hate were young people under 20 years old; and

WHEREAS, A study conducted by the Stop AAPI (Asian-American Pacific Islander) Hate Youth Campaign found that 1 in 4 young Asian Americans under 20 years old have personally experienced anti-Asian hate amid the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, Elderly and young people experience ageism in similar ways and face greater discrimination and therefore require more community support and community resources for situations of violence, discrimination, and grief; and

WHEREAS, The Black Lives Matter movement have taught us all lessons on justice and accountability when there is little to no justice or accountability to be found in the same criminal legal system and policing apparatus that killed George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Christian Hall; and

WHEREAS, Intersectional anti-racism work is not transactional, and allyship with Black people and other BIPOC communities does not divert attention from aiding Asian communities, so BIPOC must work together towards our collective liberation by dismantling systems that uphold white supremacy; and

WHEREAS, Fighting against anti-Asian sentiment encompasses collaboration with Black, Indigenous, Latine, and Pacific Islander communities to find long-term solutions to stop systemic racism, xenophobia, and violence in all our communities; and

WHEREAS, As set forth in Youth Commission File No. 1920-AL-13, Urging the Defunding of SFPD and Investment in Community Health and Safety, the Youth Commission has previously urged Mayor Breed and Board of Supervisors to cut the SFPD’s budget by at
least 50%, with 25% of those cuts going towards a “Community and People Budget” set aside for social and community-centered services; and

WHEREAS, The Youth Commission presented to the Police Commission with the recommendation to cut SFPD’s budget, but the Police Commission did not follow this recommendation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Youth Commission condemns racially-motivated attacks against the Asian community in the Bay Area, nationally, and globally, and supports the healing of pain and grief Asian communities feel in light of recent events; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Youth Commission understands that the police violence that killed George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Christian Hall to be systemic, and that the Youth Commission acknowledges that our collective response must also be systemic in nature to transform the systems that produce and reproduce harm and violence; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Youth Commission supports recent Asian community safety rallies and cross-cultural healing events such as the “Love Our People, Heal Our Communities” Coalition for Community Safety and Justice’s Days of Action on February 13 and 14 in San Francisco and Oakland; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Youth Commission stands with and signs onto the demands of over 70 Asian community organizations for San Francisco and Oakland leadership to:

1) Ensure victims and survivors of all backgrounds and language abilities receive full supportive services so they can recover and heal,

2) Expand intervention- and prevention-based programs and invest in basic needs and community-based infrastructure that we know will end the cycle of violence and keep all of us safer, and
3) Resource cross-community education and healing in Asian American and Black communities that humanizes all of us rather than demonizes or scapegoats any community of color”; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Youth Commission urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to follow the Youth Commission’s recommendations, as set forth in YC File No.1920-AL-13, to cut SFPD’s budget by 50% and invest part of the 25% “Community and People Budget” towards community intervention- and prevention-based services in response to violence; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Youth Commission urges the Mayor’s Office of Violence Prevention to use its Street Violence Intervention Program (“SVIP”) as one way to provide community intervention and prevention-based responses to de-escalating violent encounters without increased reliance on law enforcement, to provide escorts for elderly Asians to help them feel safer, and to organize workshops that bring community members together to plan solutions and promote cross-racial education, dialogue, and solidarity; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Youth Commission urges the Mayor’s Office to deliver on their discussion to create an Asian Hate Crime Task Force not under SFPD, but working alongside the SVIP, including community members who speak Asian languages to build trust and support when engaging with crime victims; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Youth Commission urges District Attorney Chesa Boudin’s office to favor restorative justice over criminal charges when dealing with perpetrators; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Youth Commission urges the Department of Children, Youth and their Families and the Department of Public Health to fund community-based organizations, such as Chinese for Affirmative Action, Asian Pacific American
Community Center, and Community Youth Center of San Francisco, which provide mental health resources, social services, and legal assistance to the Asian community, especially those who do not speak English as their first language; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Youth Commission urges SFPD to only get involved if necessary to properly and legally assist survivors of anti-Asian hate crimes in filing a police report, get mental health and medical care especially for elderly and disabled survivors, and connect them with culturally-competent and language-accessible resources to minimize miscommunication and trauma; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Youth Commission urges the San Francisco Department of Police Accountability to ensure SFPD supports all survivors of Asian hate crimes according to laws and regulations; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Youth Commission urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to take action following the hearing contained in BOS File No. 210156, on Crime and Violence Targeting Asian-American Seniors, by meeting the demands of the Bay Area Asian organizations and passing a resolution condemning anti-Asian hate crimes and supporting victims’ families, ensuring culturally-competent and language-accessible resources for all communities, and expanding community intervention- and prevention-based programs over law enforcement.

Nora Hylton, Chair
Adopted on February 22, 2021
2020-2021 San Francisco Youth Commission