At its regular meeting of March 17, 2014, the Youth Commission adopted the following motion:

**The Youth Commission calls on the Board of Supervisors to hold a timely hearing regarding the unmet needs of youth with an incarcerated parent(s) and various City departments (including but not limited to the Department of Children, Youth and Their Families; the Juvenile Probation Department, the Adult Probation Department, the Human Services Agency) efforts to provide services and support for young people with incarcerated parents.**

**Supplemental Information**

According to the 2011 DCYF Community Needs Assessment, 17,993 children and youth were estimated to have had a parent who spent time in either county jail or state prison in 2010. As this number does not include youth and children who had a parent that was incarcerated at any time during their childhood, and does not include transitional age youth, parental incarceration may affect an even greater number of San Francisco’s young people.

Recognizing that three decades of high incarceration have not made our communities safer, the San Francisco’s District Attorney, Adult Probation Department, and Juvenile Probation Department have all begun to pursue alternatives to out-of-home detention for both youth and adults. This has led to a drop in the overall population at the San Francisco county jail, Juvenile Hall, and a drop in the San Francisco jail population in 2008 was 2,015. In 2013 it was 1,413, with 1,127 would-be prisoners in diversion. See: Roberts, Chris, “Smaller new jail might meet SFS’s needs, report finds,” Published in the San Francisco Examiner, January 24, 2014. Retrieved on February 28, 2014 at: http://www.sfexaminer.com/sanfrancisco/smaller-new-jail-might-meet-sfs-needs-report-finds/Content?oid=2686090

At a February 19, 2014 meeting with youth commissioners, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer, Allen Nance reported a 40% reduction in the population at Juvenile Hall over the last five years.

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3 At a February 19, 2014 meeting with youth commissioners, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer, Allen Nance reported a 40% reduction in the population at Juvenile Hall over the last five years.
number of charges filed for non-violent drug offenses. The San Francisco Board of Supervisors also recently recognized the need to curb discrimination against formerly incarcerated people with the passage of File #131192, the Fair Chance ordinance, on February 11, 2014.

Alongside these notable efforts, youth commissioners and youth advocates with Project WHAT (We Are Here and Talking), a youth leadership program working with children of incarcerated parents, recognize an outstanding need to review how reliance on incarceration has affected a generation of young people, and specifically, the impact of parental incarceration on the wellbeing and life outcomes of young people in San Francisco.

We urge the Board of Supervisors to hold a hearing to investigate issues including, but not limited to: Efforts to collect data on needs and outcomes of youth with incarcerated parents who access city services; Notifying families and children when parents are transferred and/or released from jail or prison; What type of additional support services are offered and/or needed to support the health, wellbeing, and educational success of youth with incarcerated parents; Efforts to mitigate stigma and discrimination against formerly imprisoned people and its’ impact on families; Protocols for arrests of adults in front of children or youth and support for youth during and after the arrest and litigation process; Programs and services specifically designed to support and build the leadership of youth with incarcerated parents; Phone call and family- and child-visiting privileges and policies that affect the ability of youth to see and speak to their incarcerated parent; Support services for parents in both the adult probation and juvenile probation departments; Considerations of family impact at the time of sentencing and during parole hearings; Considerations regarding placement and proximity of parents with children placed in out-of-home detention; The effect of parental incarceration on youth and family

4 District Attorney George Gascon, at his February 27, 2014 Public Safety Address acknowledged that our communities were no safer as a result of decades of high incarceration rates. He announced that in 2009, 63% of charges filed in San Francisco were for drug offenses and that in 2013, that figure had dropped to 32% as a result of efforts to distinguish violent vs. nuisance offenses. For an overview of his address see: http://www.sfdistrictattorney.org/index.aspx?page=338
housing stability and the impact of incarceration on the City’s anti-displacement efforts; And family
impacts of parental deportations as a result of incarceration.

Even though law enforcement agencies, the criminal justice system, and Child Protective
Services regularly interface with children when their parents are arrested or incarcerated, it is our
impression that no agency is charged with comprehensively collecting data about the prevalence of
children with incarcerated parents, their wellbeing, how they are affected, or what additional services
they may need.

We see an urgent need to review existing policies and develop concerted efforts to meet the
unique needs of children with incarcerated parents.

Nicholas Persky
2013-2014 Youth Commission Chair

Adopted by Youth Commission March 17, 2014

Nicholas Persky