

1 [California Academy of Sciences Youth Climate Activists]

2 **Motion Condemning the Retaliation Against Youth Climate Activists by the**
3 **California Academy of Sciences.**

4 WHEREAS, The California Academy of Sciences created the Youth Action for
5 the Planet program in October of 2023 to empower young people aged 13 to 18 to
6 engage in climate activism and develop leadership and advocacy skills; and

7 WHEREAS, The Youth Action for the Planet program actively participated in
8 climate-related initiatives, including the Bay Area Youth Climate Summit, an Earth Day
9 pop-up, and a Martin Luther King Jr. Day panel, fostering a strong sense of
10 environmental and social responsibility among its members; and

11 WHEREAS, On June 25, 2024, several youth members distributed flyers in
12 solidarity with the museum workers' union to raise awareness of wage disparities and
13 labor rights within the institution, exercising their right to peaceful advocacy; and

14 WHEREAS, Following this act of solidarity, the California Academy of Sciences
15 abruptly dissolved the Youth Action for the Planet program, barred its members from the
16 museum, and initiated the termination of its staff coordinator, Dr. Aleks Liou, a
17 respected advocate for youth activism with expertise in intergenerational solidarity; and

18 WHEREAS, Dr. Liou secured a \$249,986 federal grant to sustain the program,
19 which the museum attempted to return or redirect under questionable circumstances,
20 further disrupting efforts to support youth climate activism; and

21 WHEREAS, The museum's actions represent a disheartening example of alleged
22 retaliation against young people for exercising their voices and participating in social

1 justice movements, which undermines the very principles of environmental advocacy
2 and community empowerment the program sought to uphold; and

3 MOVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission urges the Board of
4 Supervisors and the Mayor to condemn the California Academy of Sciences for its
5 decision to dissolve the Youth Action for the Planet program and terminate Dr. Aleks
6 Liou, actions that appear to be in direct retaliation for peaceful, youth-led advocacy; and
7 be it

8 FURTHER MOVED, That the Board recognizes and affirms the importance of
9 youth climate activism and the right of young people to engage in advocacy for social
10 and environmental justice without fear of retaliation or tokenization; and be it

11 FURTHER MOVED, That the Board urge the California Academy of Sciences to
12 acknowledge the harm caused by its actions publicly, issue an apology to the affected
13 youth and staff, and take steps to reinstate and rebuild the Youth Action for the Planet
14 program with transparent and equitable governance; and be it

15 FURTHER MOVED, That the Board call on institutions across the city to support
16 and uplift youth-led programs and initiatives, fostering an environment where young
17 people can develop leadership skills and engage in meaningful activism; and be it

18 FURTHER MOVED, That the Board reaffirms the city's commitment to
19 supporting labor rights, climate justice, and intergenerational collaboration as
20 foundational values of a just and equitable society; and

21 FURTHER MOVED, That the Board request the museum's management to
22 provide a detailed public account of its decision-making process regarding the

1 dissolution of the program and the termination of Dr. Liou to ensure accountability and
2 transparency; and be it

3 FURTHER MOVED, That the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor stand in
4 solidarity with the affected youth and their new organization, Youth Riot Network, as
5 they continue their vital work advocating for climate and social justice.