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AFT 2121

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## Resolution for Free City and the Educational Access San Franciscans Deserve

Whereas, the promise of the landmark California Master Plan for Higher Education (1960) includes free tuition at all levels of public higher education, specifying that community colleges should have open enrollment and must afford students (“all who can benefit”) an opportunity for a college education; and

Whereas, this promise of quality, free education has all but disappeared with exponential increases in tuition (and “enrollment fees”), and CA community colleges, which were free until 1983, are now \$46 a unit; and

Whereas, student debt has skyrocketed, saddling recipients of four-year degrees with on average \$30,000 in student loans, and the cumulative student loan debt, which is more than \$1 trillion and exempted from bankruptcy proceedings, is greater than the nation’s credit-card debt; and

Whereas, nationally, programs to address student debt have some states touting “free community college,” President Obama unveiling a proposal for free community college, and at least two presidential candidates discussing making college “free for all” (Sanders) or “debt-free” (Clinton), and additional state and regional programs are now announced almost weekly; and

Whereas, the denial of educational opportunity diminishes economic democracy, social mobility, public health, and racial justice, instead strengthening the school-to-prison pipeline and the “economic draft” into the military; and

Whereas, unions and working families throughout San Francisco rely on City College of San Francisco to train (and retrain) our workforce, teach English to our immigrant populations, foster lifelong learning, and provide affordable, accessible pathways into all of higher education’s opportunities; and

Whereas, the San Francisco Labor Council has a long history of supporting initiatives that will better the lives of all of San Francisco’s working families, including but not limited to the families of the 100,000 union members it represents; and

Whereas, San Francisco has the responsibility to make the city more livable for its residents and workers; and

Whereas, San Francisco has the ability to reclaim the California Master Plan for Higher Education locally, and to ensure its community college fulfills its broad, accessible mission; and

Therefore, Be it Resolved that the San Francisco Labor Council let SF supervisors know that a major priority in this year’s San Francisco budget should be making higher education more accessible for community college students; and

Be it Further Resolved that the SFLC support a Free City initiative to make City College of San Francisco free and accessible for SF residents and workers; and

Be it Further Resolved that the SFLC ask the BOS to identify funding for this worthwhile and necessary effort; and

Be it Finally Resolved that the SFLC mobilize members in support of an accessible, free City College of San Francisco.

Submitted by Mike Casey, Unite Here 2; Michael Theriault, SF Buildings Trade Council; Alysabeth Alexander, SEIU 1021; and Alisa Messer, AFT 2121, and unanimously adopted by the San Francisco Labor Council on April 11, 2016.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tim Paulson", with a long horizontal line extending to the left.

Tim Paulson  
Executive Director

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