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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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*****PRESS RELEASE: SF BOARD OF SUPERVISORS UNANIMOUSLY PASSED
HISTORIC RESOLUTION APOLOGIZING TO AFRICAN AMERICANS AND THEIR
DESCENDANTS FOR SF'S PAST ATROCITIES*****

SAN FRANCISCO, CA – Today, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors unanimously passed a historic [resolution](#) apologizing on behalf of San Francisco to African Americans and their descendants for decades of systemic and structural discrimination, targeted acts of violence, atrocities, as well as committing to the rectification and redress of past policies and misdeeds.

The resolution was introduced by Supervisor Shamann Walton last December as one out of 111 recommendations from the San Francisco Reparations Plan, researched and produced by the African American Reparations Advisory Committee (AARAC). Last September, the community gathered to support the implementation of the San Francisco Reparations Plan to right the wrongs of history and address the enormous economic disparities for Black San Franciscans stating that reparations is not merely a buzzword or a political talking point but represent a moral imperative and a reckoning with the past that is long overdue.

San Francisco has a long history of creating and enforcing laws, policies, and institutions that have perpetuated racial inequity throughout the city. In 1937, San Francisco was one of 239 cities that was "redlined" by the Federal Home Loan Bank Board and the Home Owners' Loan Corporation. This process created "residential security maps," which divided cities into areas that were appropriate for investment and areas that were subject to risk. In San Francisco, the Western Addition, the Fillmore and Bayview Hunters Point, were some of the neighborhoods that were redlined and because of this, African Americans were denied loans, city investment, infrastructure upgrades, and other economic opportunities.

In 1947, the San Francisco Planning Commission submitted a plan to raze and rebuild a large zone in the Fillmore encompassing 36 blocks. The following year, the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency was founded, which subsequently used redlining. San Francisco



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authorities deemed the Fillmore and Western Addition as “blighted,” which at the time was a vibrant Black community neighborhood and allowed the Planning Commission to institutionalize “urban renewal.” Over the next twenty years in the name of “slum clearance,” many homes were razed, businesses destroyed, and more than 10,000 Black residents were displaced because of the policy. These are just a few of the many past atrocities that San Francisco committed against its Black residents.

Black San Franciscans have faced historical redlining, limiting where they could live, limited economic and workforce opportunities for prosperity, and vast disparities when it comes to education, housing, health outcomes, and environmental justice. Only about 6% of San Franciscans are Black, but Black residents make up about 40% of the city’s homeless population. A California study found in 2017 that San Francisco had the worst Black student achievement rate of any county in California: 19% of Black students in San Francisco passed the state’s reading test compared with 31% statewide. Black mothers have the highest mortality rates in San Francisco.

“This apology has been long overdue to Black San Franciscans to repair the past harms from the city,” said Supervisor Shamann Walton. “I’d like to thank my colleagues for unanimously co-sponsoring, passing this resolution, as well as supporting reparations for Black San Franciscans. We still have a long way to go, however this is a first step to commit to the restoration of the ways racism has caused insult to Black humanity including San Francisco making a commitment to substantial ongoing, systemic, and programmatic investments in Black communities to address historical and present harms.”

“The history of harms experienced by Black San Franciscans caused by the City of County of San Francisco is long and devastating,” said Eric McDonnell, former Chair of the African American Reparations Advisory Committee. “The resulting wealth gap, housing insecurity, and health disparities persist today. Issues of reparations demand an apology. Further, it requires restitution, justice, and genuine efforts to rectify historical injustices. This apology has been a long time coming. We are pleased and appreciative of the SF Board of Supervisors unanimously approving the apology resolution. We expect that what follows this apology will be sustained actions to repair the past harms and prevent current and future harms. The Reparations Plan presented by The African American Reparations Advisory Committee offers a roadmap.”



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“An apology on public record is a vital part of corrective action and a milestone for healing for our community,” said Tinisch Hollins, former vice-chair of the African American Reparations Advisory Committee.” The San Francisco Reparations Plan outlines more than 100 additional ways for the City of San Francisco to demonstrate the sincerity of that apology by proactively creating pathways to equity for Black San Franciscans. It should be used as a blueprint for the next century.”

“I want to thank all the partners, locally and nationally, who contributed to the comprehensive process in creating the San Francisco Reparations Plan.” said Dr. Sheryl Evans Davis, Executive Director of the Human Rights Commission. “This apology is one of several recommendations that can be implemented immediately. I look forward to seeing San Francisco commit to righting the wrongs of the past towards our African American residents.”

It was timely that this resolution was heard in the Government, Audit and Oversight Committee on February 15, 2024 and passed by the full Board of Supervisors during the last week of Black History Month. The Mayor has an opportunity to sign this resolution within ten days otherwise it will automatically be in effect.

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