Resolution condemning the attempted assassination of San Francisco native and United States citizen Brandon Lee in the Philippines by suspected elements of the 54th Infantry Battalion of the Armed Forces of the Philippines; supporting the immediate evacuation of Lee from the Philippines and his repatriation to San Francisco to ensure his safety and access to adequate medical care; urging our San Francisco Federal representatives to initiate a Congressional investigation into the shooting of Lee; and urging our San Francisco Federal representatives to support a Congressional hearing on consequences of United States tax dollars going to the Philippine military and police, and to advocate for suspension of United States aid to the Duterte regime until Lee’s case is resolved and the perpetrators are brought to justice.

WHEREAS, Brandon Lee, a U.S. citizen born and raised in San Francisco, was shot multiple times outside of his home on August 6, 2019, in the Ifugao province in the Philippines; and

WHEREAS, Brandon is a 37-year old indigenous and environmental rights advocate, journalist, and volunteer paralegal with the Cordillera Human Rights Alliance in the Philippines, who previously volunteered with the San Francisco Chinese Progressive Association, worked several years with the Stonestown YMCA, and was a student at San Francisco State University where he was also a member of the League of Filipino Students; and
WHEREAS, Brandon has chosen to commit his life to advancing indigenous and environmental rights and has been living in the Philippines since 2010 with his wife and daughter and among the indigenous communities in Ifugao; and

WHEREAS, Prior to the August 6th attack, since 2015 Brandon had been subjected to repeated threats and harassment by the Philippine military for his advocacy to protect the land and rights of indigenous people in Ifugao province and the surrounding Cordillera region of the Philippines; and

WHEREAS, Since August 6th, Brandon has been recovering at the Baguio General Hospital where his brother Aaron Lee and mother Louise Lee, who is a 40 year City & County of San Francisco employee under the Department of Public Health and currently at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital, are providing 24/7 bedside care for him, and where Brandon remains in critical condition with multiple bullets still lodged in his face and back; and

WHEREAS, Brandon’s experience fits the pattern of harassment, intimidation, and violence documented by human rights watchdogs Alliance for the Advancement of People’s Rights (“Karapatan”) and Amnesty International and credibly alleged to have been committed by elements of the Philippine military and police against human rights defenders and all people expressing opposition to government policies under the administration of President Rodrigo Duterte; and

WHEREAS, According to the Cordillera People’s Alliance and the Cordillera Human Rights Alliance, the attack on Brandon was not isolated, but part of simultaneous attacks carried out the same day on both Brandon and seven of his colleagues in the Ifugao Peasant Movement by elements of the 54th Infantry Battalion of the Armed Forces of the Philippines; and
WHEREAS, The attack on Brandon and his colleagues is a direct result of Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte’s war against human rights advocates, critics of his administration, and alleged drug users, that has claimed nearly 30,000 lives since 2016, with few killings undergoing any investigation and only one resulting in the prosecution of a perpetrator; and

WHEREAS, The international NGO Global Witness has declared the Philippines to be the deadliest country in the world for defenders of human rights, the environment and natural resources, with 13 environmentalists, 54 indigenous people, and 207 farmers and peasants extrajudicially killed since Duterte took office in 2016; and

WHEREAS, The incidence of violence against environmental and human rights defenders like Brandon has dramatically increased since President Duterte’s invocation of Executive Order 70 in 2018, which operationalizes the Philippine government’s counter-insurgency program that includes arbitrarily and unilaterally targeting activists as “terrorists or supporters of terrorists” to silence legitimate and legal dissent, disallowing the existence of genuine democratic space in Philippine society; and

WHEREAS, The stated intent of the policies of President Duterte coupled with the circumstances of the harassment and intimidation which led up to the shooting of Brandon support the assertion that this attack on Brandon was an assassination attempt by the Philippine military or other state agents, the first such assassination attempt on a U.S. citizen under the Duterte regime; and

WHEREAS, Brandon’s life continues to be severely threatened as he remains in critical condition in a hospital in the Philippines, where members of the Philippine police and military constantly conduct surveillance on him, unidentified and unauthorized people have made several attempts to enter his hospital room, and the facilities lack adequate technology, equipment and supplies to provide the critical care he needs in order to survive; and
WHEREAS, Brandon’s family and Philippines-based doctors have determined that Brandon should be transported back to San Francisco where he can urgently receive the medical treatment that he needs in a safe facility where he will not be subject to further threats to his life; and

WHEREAS, On April 23, 2019, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors adopted a Resolution supporting United States House Resolution No. 233, authored by Congresswoman Jackie Speier, condemning the Government of the Philippines for its role in state-sanctioned extrajudicial killings by police, condemning the Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte’s drug war that has taken the lives of over 29,000 Filipinos, and urging San Francisco’s Federal representatives to support a congressional hearing on the consequences of U.S. tax dollars being used to fund these activities, and advocating for the U.S. to cut aid to the Duterte regime, on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. 190423, which is hereby declared to be a part of this Resolution as if set forth fully herein; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors hereby condemns the brutal attempted assassination of Brandon Lee allegedly by elements of Philippine security forces; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors supports the immediate medical evacuation of Brandon Lee to San Francisco where he can be away from his assailants and receive quality medical care; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors urges the Department of Public Health and Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital to support Brandon Lee’s family in bringing him back to San Francisco for the best trauma recovery care; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors urges our San Francisco representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi, U.S. Senator Kamala Harris, U.S. Senator Mar, Haney, Yee, Fewer, Safai, Stefani, Brown, Mandelman, Ronen, Walton, Peskin
Dianne Feinstein, and Congresswoman Jackie Speier to demand that the U.S. Embassy take immediate action to evacuate Brandon Lee from the Philippines and ensure his safe repatriation back to San Francisco and to a hospital that can provide the urgent medical care that he needs; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors urges our San Francisco representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi, U.S. Senator Kamala Harris, U.S. Senator Feinstein, and Congresswoman Jackie Speier to initiate a congressional investigation into the attempted assassination of Brandon Lee; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors urges our San Francisco representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi, U.S. Senator Kamala Harris, U.S. Senator Feinstein, and Congresswoman Jackie Speier to support a congressional hearing on consequences of U.S. tax dollars going to the Philippine military and police and to champion a moratorium on U.S. military aid to the Duterte regime; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors directs the Clerk of the Board to send a copy of this Resolution to San Francisco representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi, U.S. Senator Kamala Harris, U.S. Senator Feinstein, and Congresswoman Jackie Speier.
Resolution condemning the attempted assassination of San Francisco native and United States citizen Brandon Lee in the Philippines by suspected elements of the 54th Infantry Battalion of the Armed Forces of the Philippines; supporting the immediate evacuation of Lee from the Philippines and his repatriation to San Francisco to ensure his safety and access to adequate medical care; urging our San Francisco Federal representatives to initiate a Congressional investigation into the shooting of Lee; and urging our San Francisco Federal representatives to support a Congressional hearing on consequences of United States tax dollars going to the Philippine military and police, and to advocate for suspension of United States aid to the Duterte regime until Lee’s case is resolved and the perpetrators are brought to justice.

September 10, 2019 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED
Ayes: 10 - Brown, Fewer, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, Walton and Yee
Absent: 1 - Peskin

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED on 9/10/2019 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution, not being signed by the Mayor within the time limit as set forth in Section 3.103 of the Charter, or time waived pursuant to Board Rule 2.14.2, became effective without her approval in accordance with the provision of said Section 3.103 of the Charter or Board Rule 2.14.2.

Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board