[Urging Social Media Platforms to Enforce Their Community Standards and/or Guidelines to Prevent Violence]

Resolution urging Social Media Platforms to enforce their Community Standards and/or Guidelines to prevent and eliminate content promoting guns, violence, racism, hate, or any other content that violates the Community Standards and/or Guidelines through their platforms on Meta, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, among other products and services.

WHEREAS, Social Media Platforms are interactive technologies that facilitate the creation and sharing of information, ideas, interests, and other expression through virtual communities and networks; and

WHEREAS, The term ‘social’ in regard to ‘media’ suggests that platforms are user-centric and enable communal activity and as such, social media can be viewed as online facilitators or enhancers of human networks—webs of individuals who enhance social connectivity but unfortunately can also be a space where violence can spread in communities resulting in life or death consequences; and

WHEREAS, Meta Platforms, Inc., doing business as Meta, is one of the biggest social media companies with the largest user base, and formerly named Facebook, Inc., and TheFacebook, Inc., is an American multinational technology company based in Menlo Park, California that owns and operates Facebook, Instagram, Threads, and WhatsApp, among other products and services; and

WHEREAS, Additional Social Media Platforms with a large user base not under Meta include YouTube, TikTok, Snapchat, Pinterest, Reddit, LinkedIn, and Twitter which, each have similar Community Standards and/or Guidelines to regulate violent content; and
WHEREAS, According to Meta, the Community Standards for Facebook state: “The goal of our Community Standards has always been to create a safe place for expression, but we recognize the internet creates new and increased opportunities for abuse.”;

WHEREAS, Facebook’s policy rational aims to prevent potential offline harm that may be related to content on Facebook and has stated that they remove language that incites or facilitates serious violence along with removing content, disabling accounts and working with law enforcement when Facebook believes there is a genuine risk of physical harm or direct threats to public safety; and

WHEREAS, Facebook also has Community Standards on violence and criminal behavior, safety, objectionable content including hate speech or sexual solicitation, integrity and authenticity including guidelines on fake accounts, respecting intellectual property, and content-related requests and decisions from users; and

WHEREAS, Instagram’s Community Guidelines include wanting “…Instagram to continue to be an authentic and safe place for inspiration and expression; Help us foster this community; Post only your own photos and videos and always follow the law. Respect everyone on Instagram…”; and

WHEREAS, Instagram states that it “is not a place to support or praise terrorism, organized crime, or hate groups; Offering sexual services, buying or selling firearms, alcohol, and tobacco products between private individuals, and buying or selling non-medical or pharmaceutical drugs are also not allowed,” and

WHEREAS, Instagram has stated that it will remove content that contains credible threats or hate speech, content that targets private individual to degrade or shame them, personal information meant to blackmail or harass someone, and repeated unwanted messages… and that “it’s never OK to encourage violence or attack anyone based on their
race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, disabilities, or diseases…"; and

WHEREAS, According to Instagram, “serious threats of harm to public and personal safety aren’t allowed; This includes specific threats of physical harm as well as threats of theft, vandalism, and other financial harm; We carefully review reports of threats and consider many things when determining whether a threat is credible”; and

WHEREAS, According to TikTok, the company does not allow any violent threats, incitement to violence, or promotion of criminal activities that may harm people, animals, or property… if there is a specific, credible, and imminent threat to human life or serious physical injury, [they] will report it to relevant law enforcement authorities; and

WHEREAS, Both Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and other Social Media Platforms have options for users to report content if it violates the Community Standards or Guidelines but the process of removing the flagged content is not transparent and often flagged content in violation continues to stay on the respective platforms for long periods of time or are never removed; and

WHEREAS, Despite the Community Standards and Guidelines, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and other Social Media Platforms continue to allow people to post content promoting guns, eliciting violence, and spreading hate among other content that threatens the safety of individuals or groups; and

WHEREAS, In some cases, when content in violation of Community Standards and/or Guidelines are removed, it is too late and the damage in real life consequences have already happened; and

WHEREAS, Content that is violation of Community Standards and Guidelines but remain posted on the respective platforms have real life consequences resulting in increased
violence in communities, including in some cases, gun violence between individuals and

WHEREAS, This type of content has led to homicides across the Bay Area including
cities like San Francisco, Vallejo, Antioch, Oakland, and across the state and country, and has
even caused the death of famous people; and

WHEREAS, While both Facebook and Instagram encourages users that “many
disputes and misunderstandings can be resolved directly between members of the
community,” this does not stop the violence between community members outside of the
platform; and

WHEREAS, Organizations such as the Street Violence Intervention Program, Latino
Task Force, Young Community Developers, United Playaz, San Francisco Black Wallstreet,
local governing entities, public defenders, and law enforcement leadership across the state
and country support Social Media Platforms to enforce their own Community Standards
and/or Guidelines to ensure that violence does not spread into shootings, homicides, and
retaliation in the community; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors urges all Social Media
Platforms to regulate and eliminate any content that promotes guns, elicits violence, and
spreads hate; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors urges all Social
Media Platforms to enforce their Community Standards and Guidelines and address user
generated reports on their Social Media Platforms including Facebook, Instagram, Threads,
Whatsapp, YouTube, TikTok, Snapchat, Pinterest, Reddit, LinkedIn, Twitter and other
products and services, on a timely manner to prevent any violence, especially gun violence,
from transcending outside of social media into real life; and, be it
FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors urges all Social Media Platforms to partner with local governing entities and law enforcement to prevent violence from spreading on their Social Media Platforms posted by users; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors hereby directs the Clerk of the Board to transmit a copy of this Resolution to Meta, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, TikTok, Snapchat, Pinterest, Reddit, LinkedIn, and Twitter, the top largest Social Media Platform companies currently in operation.
File Number: 230851  Date Passed: July 25, 2023

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July 25, 2023 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED
Ayes: 11 - Chan, Dorsey, Engardio, Mandelman, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani and Walton

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED on 7/25/2023 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

07/28/2023  Date Approved