Resolution opposing California State Proposition 20, Criminal Sentencing, Parole, and DNA Collection Initiative, on the November 3, 2020, ballot.

WHEREAS, Safety for all Californians is the highest priority for the San Francisco Board of Supervisors; and

WHEREAS, Once a bellwether for mass incarceration, in the past decade, California reduced incarceration more than any state in the nation and has fueled a national movement that is leading the country away from the ineffective status quo of mass incarceration and toward a new approach that prioritizes prevention and addressing the root causes of crime; and

WHEREAS, California’s California voters’ overwhelming support for two criminal reform ballot measures – Proposition 47, which in 2014 reclassified some low-level nonviolent crimes from felonies to misdemeanors; and Proposition 57, which in 2016 gave inmates convicted of certain non-violent offenses an opportunity to earn early release; led to a 25 percent drop in incarceration, while statewide crime rates remain at historic lows and new crime prevention programs launched as a result of these reforms are showing promise; and

WHEREAS, Proposition 47 was the hallmark ballot initiative that officially ushered in an era of reform and shifted investments from ineffective mass incarceration programs to services that better meet community needs and prevent crime from occurring in the first place -- mental health services, trauma recovery and addiction services; and

WHEREAS, According to the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice, Proposition 47 is projected to save a record $122.5 million in the 2020-2021 fiscal year; and
WHEREAS, The nonpartisan Public Policy Institute of California reported in 2018 the Proposition 47 had also closed racial disparities in arrests and bookings; and

WHEREAS, Despite a decisive body of research that has shown that zeroing in on community health, not incarceration, more effectively prevents crime, thousands of Californians currently struggle with untreated mental health, substance abuse and trauma – some of the well-known drivers of crime as well as drivers of health vulnerabilities and less than 10 percent of people struggling with substance abuse and only 1 out of 6 people struggling with mental illness attain treatment; and

WHEREAS, Prevention should be the focus of our justice resources and attention – for both public health and public safety, California still spends more than $11 billion annually on prisons, a 500 percent increase over 30 years and one that dwarfs other critical public investments and over the past 20 years, for example, prison spending has grown 65 percent faster than spending on hospitals; and

WHEREAS, Proposition 20 on California’s November 3, 2020, ballot is an effort to turn back the clock, is funded by special interests that want to spend tens of millions of taxpayer dollars on prisons while rolling back effective criminal justice reforms overwhelmingly supported by California voters; and

WHEREAS, Proposition 20 would reduce California’s threshold for felony theft to one of the lowest in the nation and waste taxpayer dollars incarcerating people for nonviolent crimes while causing draconian cuts to proven crime-reduction programs; and

WHEREAS, Passage of Proposition 20 would mean as many as 10,000 more people could end up in California prisons and jails, undermining the key pathway California lawmakers have used to reallocate resources from incarceration to local safety solutions; and

WHEREAS, Black and Latinx people are disproportionately impacted in the criminal justice system, as nationally, Black men comprise about 13 percent of the male population,
but about 35 percent of those incarcerated; and one in three Black men born today can expect
to be incarcerated in his lifetime, compared to one in six Latino men and one in 17 white men;
further, Black women are similarly impacted: one in 18 Black women born in 2001 is likely to be incarcerated sometime in her life, compared to one in 111 white women; and

WHEREAS, Passage of Proposition 20 would also defund Trauma Recovery Centers, which primarily serve people of color and are critical lifelines for survivors of violence; and

WHEREAS, According to a ballot analysis, the fiscal impacts of Proposition 20 would include an increase to state and local correctional costs in the tens of millions of dollars annually, and increase by several millions of dollars annual state and local court-related costs and with state and local governments already reeling from COVID-19 fiscal impacts, voters should not support a proposal to once again balloon prison populations and increase costs; and

WHEREAS, Proposition 20 would also remove the incentives for inmates to modify their behavior and seek rehabilitation by limiting opportunities for early release; now,
therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco hereby formally opposes Proposition 20, the Criminal Sentencing, Parole, and DNA Collection Initiative, on the November 3, 2020, ballot; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco go on record in opposition of Proposition 20, the Criminal Sentencing, Parole, and DNA Collection Initiative, on the November 3, 2020, ballot; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco urges other municipalities to oppose Proposition 20, the Criminal Sentencing, Parole, and DNA Collection Initiative, on the November 3, 2020, ballot.
Resolution opposing California State Proposition 20, Criminal Sentencing, Parole, and DNA Collection Initiative, on the November 3, 2020, ballot.

October 06, 2020 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED

Ayes: 11 - Fewer, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, Walton and Yee

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED on 10/6/2020 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