

[California Academy of Sciences Youth Climate Activists]

Motion addressing the dissolution of Youth Action for the Planet by the California Academy of Sciences.

WHEREAS, The California Academy of Sciences created the Youth Action for the Planet program in October of 2023 to empower young people aged 13 to 18 to engage in climate activism and develop leadership and advocacy skills; and

WHEREAS, The Youth Action for the Planet program actively participated in climate-related initiatives, including the Bay Area Youth Climate Summit, an Earth Day pop-up, and a Martin Luther King Jr. Day panel, fostering a strong sense of environmental and social responsibility among its members; and

WHEREAS, On June 25, 2024, several youth members distributed flyers in solidarity with the museum workers' union to raise awareness of wage disparities and labor rights within the institution, exercising their right to peaceful advocacy; and

WHEREAS, Following this act of solidarity, the California Academy of Sciences abruptly dissolved the Youth Action for the Planet program, barred its members from the museum, and initiated the termination of its staff coordinator, Dr. Aleks Liou, a respected advocate for youth activism with expertise in intergenerational solidarity; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Liou secured a \$249,986 federal grant to sustain the program, which the museum attempted to return or redirect under questionable circumstances, further disrupting efforts to support youth climate activism; and

WHEREAS, The museum's actions appear to represent a disheartening example of pushback against young people for exercising their voices and participating in social justice movements, which undermines the very principles of environmental advocacy and community empowerment the program sought to uphold; and

MOVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission urges the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor to address the California Academy of Sciences' decision to dissolve the Youth Action for the Planet program and terminate Dr. Aleks Liou, actions that appear to be in response to peaceful, youth-led advocacy; and be it

FURTHER MOVED, That the Board request the museum's management to provide a detailed public account of its decision-making process regarding the dissolution of the program and the termination of Dr. Liou to ensure accountability and transparency; and be it

FURTHER MOVED, That the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor stand in solidarity with the affected youth and their new organization, Youth Riot Network, as they continue their vital work advocating for climate and social justice; and be it

FURTHER MOVED, That the Board recognizes and affirm the importance of youth climate activism and the right of young people to engage in advocacy for social and environmental justice without fear of retaliation or tokenization; and be it

FURTHER MOVED, That the Board call on institutions across the city to support and uplift youth-led programs and initiatives with transparent and equitable governance, fostering an environment where young people can develop leadership skills and engage in meaningful activism; and

FURTHER MOVED, That the Board reaffirm the city's commitment to supporting labor rights, climate justice, and intergenerational collaboration as foundational values of a just and equitable society.