

1 [CELL PHONE RADIATION SAFETY AND DISCLOSURE]

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3 **Resolution recommending measures for educating the public on and reducing exposure to**
4 **radiation from cell phones, including disclosure of radiation information at point of sale.**

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6 WHEREAS, The Policy Committee of the Commission on the Environment met on
7 December 14, 2009 and unanimously adopted the findings and recommendations listed below;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, More that 270 million people in the United States (US) use cell phones with
10 an increasing number of them children, and

11 WHEREAS, Cell phones are an important tool of communication, especially during times
12 of emergency; and

13 WHEREAS, A cell phone emits Radio Frequency (RF) radiation from the antenna of the
14 device, often in a 360-degree pattern, as the device seeks to make a connection with the cell
15 tower; and

16 WHEREAS, Recently published long-term studies looking at cell phone use for 10 years
17 have indicated evidence of increasing occurrence of brain and salivary cancers especially on the
18 side of the head where cell phones are held; and

19 WHEREAS, **Children are potentially more vulnerable to this radiation exposure** due
20 to their smaller head size, thinner skulls, different composition of tissues, and still- developing
21 brains and bodies; and

22 WHEREAS, **Governments around the world including France, Israel, Germany,**
23 **Finland, and Switzerland,** have issued warnings about prolonged cell phone use, especially for
24 children; and

1 WHEREAS, **The French Senate is considering legislation that would restrict the**
2 **promotion and sale of cell phones for use by children and would require companies to**
3 **offer headsets with each phone sold; and**

4 WHEREAS, The maximum level of radiation emitted from a cell phone and absorbed by
5 the human brain and body is called the Specific Absorption Rate (SAR) and these values range in
6 cell phones from 0.2 to 1.6 W/kg, the maximum legal value in the US; and

7 WHEREAS, The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not review the
8 safety of cell phones before they come to market but does have the authority to take action
9 against the unsafe exposure to radiation from these products; and

10 WHEREAS, the United States Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has
11 accepted the safety standards for cell phone radiation set by the electronics professional trade
12 association, the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE); and

13 WHEREAS, cell phone radiation safety levels accepted by the FCC do not take into
14 account potential increased vulnerabilities of children nor the cumulative effects of long-term use
15 and do not provide sufficient protection in determining a maximum allowable SAR value of 1.6
16 W/Kg for the human head and brain; and

17 WHEREAS, **San Francisco has adopted a Precautionary Principle Ordinance** that
18 compels government agencies to heed early warning signs from the scientific literature and to
19 take protective action to prevent harm; and

20 WHEREAS, Cell phone manufacturers are required to report the SAR values of their
21 phones to the FCC but are not obligated to make this information available to the public; and

22 WHEREAS, Consumers in San Francisco, and beyond, have the right to know the level
23 of radiation being emitted by cell phones as they make their purchasing decisions; and

24 WHEREAS, Consumers in San Francisco should be informed of any steps that can be
25 taken to minimize harm, such as the importance of using head-sets and texting as an alternative
26 to speaking directly into the phone, now, therefore, be it

27 RESOLVED that the San Francisco Commission on the Environment recommends that the:

- 1 a. **Federal Government conduct a review of cell phone safety standards** and revise
2 these based on concerns for children and long-term effects and **consider a ban on cell**
3 **phone advertising aimed at children.**
- 4 b. **State of California and the Federal Government adopt legislation that requires**
5 **warning labels be placed on all cell phone packaging** regarding exposure to radiation,
6 **especially for children.**
- 7 c. City/County **adopt legislation requiring that retailers of cell phones provide point-**
8 **of-sale information on SAR values and information on safer use.** The SAR value
9 should be as visible to the consumer as the price.
- 10 d. City/County work closely with the School District to educate students, parents, caregivers
11 and teachers about cell phone radiation and the importance of appropriate use of cell
12 phones including: limiting their use to emergencies, use of a headset, and keeping the
13 phone away from the child's body to the maximum extent possible.
- 14 e. City/County work closely with the School District to prohibit the distribution of cell phone
15 promotional materials and the use of cell phones as part of the curriculum especially for
16 elementary schools.
- 17 f. City/County explore ways to encourage cell phone companies to develop technologies,
18 products, and educational programs that facilitate the safest possible use of cell phones.
- 19 g. Director of the Department of the Environment and the Department of Technology, under
20 the Precautionary Purchasing Ordinance, require that cell phones purchased by City
21 Departments minimize SAR values and come with both a headset and educational
22 materials on minimizing exposure to radiation.
- 23 h. Department of the Environment staff initiate an educational campaign that includes a web
24 page to help consumers identify low SAR value phones and protective measures to
25 reduce exposure to cell phone radiation.
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