



# SAN FRANCISCO REPUBLICAN PARTY

ESTABLISHED 1856

## **Resolution Opposing SB 281**

**Adopted by the San Francisco Republican Party on April 3, 2019**

**WHEREAS,** The Cow Palace Arena & Event Center has been an important California State Fairground co-located in San Francisco and San Mateo Counties since 1941 and annually hosts the Grand National Livestock Exposition, Horse Show and Rodeo and the Junior Grand Livestock Show.

**WHEREAS,** The Cow Palace has also been the home to over a half dozen professional sports teams as well as the venue to numerous athletic competitions, the Billy Graham Crusade, appearances by JFK and Martin Luther King, Jr., rock concerts including a benefit concert by U2 which raised \$10 million for the UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital, business and trade exhibitions, Crossroads of the West gun shows, Dickens Christmas Fairs, commencement ceremonies for the Academy of Arts, the 1956 and 1964 Republican National Conventions, and the starting point and opening ceremony for the annual AIDS/Life Cycle cycling event from San Francisco to Los Angeles;

**WHEREAS,** The Cow Palace is one of 52 District Agricultural Associations throughout California and is officially the 1-A District Agricultural Association, a State government entity that has policy and fiscal oversight from the California Department of Food and Agriculture's Branch of Fairs and Expositions, within the Division of Marketing Services. The 1-A District Agricultural Association is governed by a nine-member board appointed by the Governor, whose members represent San Francisco and San Mateo Counties;

**WHEREAS,** The Cow Palace Arena and Event Center is debt-free, self-sufficient, and highly profitable -- using its profits to maintain and upgrade its facilities;

**WHEREAS,** The Cow Palace has ample parking to accommodate its vendors and thousands of guests, and leases multi-vehicle parking spaces to local companies and organizations and one of its parking areas to the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency to train its bus drivers;

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**WHEREAS,** The Cow Palace property is uniquely suited to become a designated emergency shelter site which could accommodate helipad space and provide acres of room for vans and trucks, indoor areas for tents and beds, and plenty of existing restrooms and kitchen facilities;

**WHEREAS,** The Cow Palace Arena and Event Center is a successful institution which has well and faithfully served the people of San Francisco and San Mateo Counties and the rest of the Bay Area for three quarters of a century. No radical restructuring is needed, but that hasn't deterred Senators Weiner and Hill, and Assembly Members Chiu, Ting, Berman, and Mullins, with the blessing of ill-informed, ideologically driven local politicians, from introducing SB 281 which is a "solution" looking for a "problem";

**WHEREAS,** SB 281 would replace the current appointed board of the Cow Palace Arena and Event Center with an entirely new board governing a newly created Cow Palace Authority consisting of seven members -- including four County Supervisors from San Francisco and San Mateo, and three members of the City Council of Daly City;

**WHEREAS,** SB 281 provides no requirement that the new governing board act in a fiscally responsible fashion nor that it live within an approved balanced budget each year;

**WHEREAS,** SB 281 authorizes the new governing board to issue up to \$2 billion in bonded indebtedness subject to the vote of the people of San Francisco and San Mateo Counties, and that the debt need not be paid off until 2060;

**WHEREAS,** SB 281 allows the new governing board unbridled power to raise an unlimited amount of funds to award grants to favored public and private entities, including developers;

**WHEREAS,** The new governing board would have sole authority to demolish the Cow Palace, develop some or all of its 68 acres for housing and mixed-use development, or continue existing operations, with the sole exception that gun shows and the sale of guns on the premises would be banned;

**WHEREAS,** Should the new governing board decide to build housing and/or mixed-use development on the Cow Palace Authority's properties, such development(s) would be exempt from complying with existing height, density, and floor area ratio zoning rules of San Francisco, Daly City, or San Mateo County;

**WHEREAS,** As a give-away to developers, SB 281 declares that the transfer of property "constitutes a public purpose and does not constitute a gift of public funds"

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to a private interest or interests -- which "gift" would otherwise be prohibited under the provisions of Section 6 of Article XVI of the State Constitution; and

**WHEREAS**, SB 281 provides no protections against "conflicts of interests" – protections which would prohibit a member of the new governing board from voting to award a grant to any public or private entity or to benefit any developer that has contributed cash, made a non-monetary contribution, or supplied volunteers to the member's political campaign(s); now, therefore be it

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the San Francisco Republican Party on April 3, 2018, voted overwhelmingly to oppose SB 281 for all of the above reasons;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the San Francisco Republican Party calls upon each and every Republican Senator and Assembly Member of the State of California to oppose SB 281 in committee and on the floor; and,

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that should SB 281 pass both houses, that it be vetoed by Governor Gavin Newsom, in keeping with vetoes by Governors Schwarzenegger and Brown of similar bills passed by the legislature in the past.