

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL URGING PASSAGE OF THE [STUDENT PRESS
FREEDOM RESTORATION ACT]

WHEREAS, Journalism is a pillar of democracy, and a free press is protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution; and

WHEREAS, Student journalists are important participants in the media ecosystem and are increasingly the only source of local and education news in their communities; their work creates an historical record of their generation's experiences, and provides an important service to the community; and

WHEREAS, The integrity and independence of journalists is a key tenet of their work and is guided by Codes of Ethics as determined by professional journalism and journalism education societies such as the Society of Professional Journalists; and

WHEREAS, Censorship of student journalists contravenes the tenets of the First Amendment and the basis of a free and informed society and it undermines the role of education in producing engaged, civic-minded, critical thinkers; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Supreme Court held in *Tinker vs. Des Moines (1970)* that students do not "shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gates" with only narrow and limited exceptions;

WHEREAS, the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Hazelwood School District vs. Kuhlmeier (1988)* permits subjective and overbroad censorship of student journalists by school administrators and has been discredited by every journalist education association in America; and

WHEREAS, despite its essential role in the school community, student journalists' speech is held to a higher standard than other students on campus and is often censored for arbitrary and subjective reasons;

WHEREAS; student media advisers have faced retaliation, reassignment or termination for refusing to censor responsible and truthful student media; and

WHEREAS, [sponsors] have introduced the [Student Press Freedom Restoration Act] to restore and protect the rights of student journalists and advisers; and

WHEREAS, The Act would prohibit the censorship of student journalists except in certain narrow circumstances in line with the standard established by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Tinker v. Des Moines*; and would protect from retaliation advisers who refuse to illegally infringe upon student journalists' press freedom; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED That the City Council of the City of _____ does hereby support the Student Press Freedom Restoration Act and urges all members of the [state legislature] to support the Act and pass it, restoring and protecting the rights of student journalists and their advisers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That, upon passage, copies of this resolution be sent to the elected House and Senate representatives of [city].