Resolution in Recognition of Pete Seeger,  
American Folk Singer/Songwriter

Whereas, in 1960, Pete Seeger, the legendary folk singer, came to San Diego to perform at a rented auditorium at Hoover High School; and

Whereas the San Diego Unified School District Board of Education sought to require Mr. Seeger to swear a loyalty oath in order to use the auditorium, which read in part:

The undersigned states that, to the best of his knowledge, the school property…will not be used for the commission of any act intended to further any program or movement the purpose of which is to accomplish the overthrow of the government of the United States by force, violence, or other unlawful means…and is not a Communist-action organization or a Communist-front organization required by law to be registered with the attorney general of the United States.

Whereas Pete Seeger refused on principle to sign the oath demanded by the Board just as he had refused, on First Amendment grounds, to testify as to his political views and associations when called before the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) in 1955; and

Whereas San Diego attorneys Irwin Gostin and Lou Katz, on behalf of the American Civil Liberties Union of San Diego, successfully challenged the Board’s demand that Seeger sign a loyalty oath, resulting in an injunction by San Diego Superior Court Judge Clarence Harden that allowed Seeger to play the concert as scheduled to 1400 ecstatic music fans; and

Whereas Pete Seeger was blacklisted for his real and alleged political views from the 1950s until the late 1960s; and

Whereas Pete Seeger is now universally acknowledged as an American icon who has dedicated his entire life to promoting peace, a clean environment, participation in our democratic system, and folk music;

Whereas free speech and freedom of association are among the fundamental tenets of our democratic republic; and

Whereas loyalty oaths used during the Red Scares and McCarthy Era were wrongly and unfairly used to discredit, ostracize, or ruin the lives of law abiding Americans and have long since been discredited;

Be It Hereby Declared that the San Diego Unified School District Board of Education deeply regrets its predecessors’ actions, and extends a warm hand of friendship to and appreciation for one of our dearest national treasures, Pete Seeger, and invites him to return to San Diego at any time to perform or receive our expressions in person.