

1 [Resolution urging United States Postal Service to recognize SROs as permanent housing]

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3 **Resolution urging the United States Postal Service to recognize SROs as permanent**  
4 **low-cost housing for many of San Franciscans, and to afford SRO residents the right to**  
5 **receive their mail with the same security and privacy as tenants of traditional**  
6 **apartments.**

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8 WHEREAS, The high cost of rental housing in San Francisco makes Single Room  
9 Occupancy residential hotels (SROs) the only permanently affordable housing option for  
10 many of the seniors, immigrants, families and individuals on low or fixed incomes; and

11 WHEREAS, The City and County of San Francisco has recognized the essential role of  
12 SROs and utilized them as a valuable resource to permanently house more than 1,300  
13 formerly homeless people in the city's Master Lease Program, having become a national  
14 model for permanent supportive housing and an important part of finding a solution to the  
15 homeless problem; and,

16 WHEREAS, A number of non-profit-owned or managed SROs have installed mailboxes  
17 in accordance with United States Postal Service specifications in their lobbies; and,

18 WHEREAS, The United States Postal Service refuses to deliver mail directly to the  
19 boxes in these buildings, stating that SROs are 'transient hotels' and not eligible for direct  
20 delivery service; and,

21 WHEREAS, The USPS insists on 'central delivery,' whereby mail is dropped in a bag at  
22 the front desk and distributed by desk clerks; and

23 WHEREAS, Desk clerks are low-paid, under-trained, and overburdened with the extra  
24 responsibility of handling mail that adds time and difficulty to their jobs, resulting in mail being  
25 frequently lost, misplaced, or accidentally given to the wrong person; and,

1           WHEREAS, The USPS refuses to forward mail to tenants' new addresses when they  
2 move out of SROs; and,

3           WHEREAS, This lack of services creates an undue burden for SRO tenants who must  
4 return to a former address regularly and attempt to collect mail rather than have it forwarded  
5 to their new address as the USPS does for apartment tenants; and,

6           WHEREAS, The Postmaster's Office has stated that section 631.44 of the US Postal  
7 Operations Manual calls for Central Delivery to SROs, not delivery to individual mailboxes,  
8 when, in fact, this section contains no language that would prohibit the direct delivery to  
9 individual mailboxes in SROs, and,

10           WHEREAS, Mail security and privacy is high priority for SRO tenants, many of whom  
11 must receive SSI, Veterans Disability, or paychecks on time in order to pay their rent for the  
12 month; and,

13           WHEREAS, Lost or delayed mail has resulted in SRO tenants having been bumped to  
14 the back of the Section 8 list after years of waiting, or losing out on other essential services  
15 because of missed appointments; and,

16           WHEREAS, Many have been homeless before and are understandably afraid that lost  
17 or misplaced mail could result in homelessness again; and,

18           WHEREAS, At the Central City SRO Collaborative's 2003 tenant convention, attended  
19 by 300 tenants from more than 100 San Francisco SROs, "Problems with mail distribution in  
20 the hotels" ranked as one of the most pressing issues for tenants surveyed; therefore be it

21           RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors urges the United States  
22 Postal Service to recognize SROs as permanent low-cost housing for many of San  
23 Francisco's low-income citizens, and as such, afford SRO residents the right to receive their  
24 mail with the same security and privacy as tenants of traditional apartments.  
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