

1 [Lawrence Ferlinghetti Day - March 24, 2019]

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3 **Resolution declaring March 24, 2019, as Lawrence Ferlinghetti Day in the City and**  
4 **County of San Francisco.**

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6 WHEREAS, Lawrence Ferlinghetti is a poet, playwright, painter, internationally-  
7 acclaimed publisher and activist, who is best known for his prominent voice in the “wide-open”  
8 poetry movement and as a foundational figure in the establishment of the Beat movement;  
9 and

10 WHEREAS, Mr. Ferlinghetti was born in Bronxville, New York, on March 24, 1919, to  
11 Carlo Ferlinghetti, an immigrant from Brescia, Italy, and Clemence Mendes-Monsanto; and

12 WHEREAS, While serving in the U.S. Navy during World War II, Mr. Ferlinghetti  
13 adopted a lifelong commitment to pacifism and anti-war activism after witnessing first-hand  
14 the action at the Normandy invasion and, later, the horrific aftermath of the atomic bomb that  
15 obliterated Nagasaki; and

16 WHEREAS, After returning from his service, Mr. Ferlinghetti continued his academic  
17 career and, in 1947, received a Master’s degree in English Literature from Columbia  
18 University and, in 1950, a Doctorate de l’Université de Paris (Sorbonne); and

19 WHEREAS, Mr. Ferlinghetti pursued his passion in literature and moved to San  
20 Francisco where he co-founded City Lights Bookstore in 1953, the first all-paperback  
21 bookstore in the country that later became an international literary gathering place for writers,  
22 readers, artists, and intellectuals; and

23 WHEREAS, In 1956, after the sale of Allen Ginsberg’s “Howl and Other Poems” to an  
24 undercover police officer, Mr. Ferlinghetti was arrested and charged with the sale of obscene  
25 material; and

1           WHEREAS, The ensuing affirmation of Mr. Ferlinghetti’s First Amendment Rights in a  
2 court of law helped established a legal precedent that strengthened the stature of City Lights  
3 Publishers and invigorated the community’s ongoing battle against censorship of controversial  
4 works; and

5           WHEREAS, Over the course of his esteemed career, Mr. Ferlinghetti’s influence  
6 expanded into the international literary and arts scene, earning him numerous international  
7 awards and coming full circle when, in 1998, he was declared San Francisco’s Poet Laureate;  
8 and

9           WHEREAS, Mr. Ferlinghetti’s paintings have been displayed in galleries and museums  
10 around the world, including the Smithsonian Museum of American Arts, the Fine Arts Museum  
11 of San Francisco, Centre Pompidou in Paris, and Museo di Roma in Trastevere, Italy; and

12           WHEREAS, As the centennial of his birth looms, Mr. Ferlinghetti continues to energize  
13 the international arts and literary world by blurring the boundaries between social justice  
14 advocacy, literature and art, constantly challenging the status quo and demanding that we  
15 “create works capable of answering the challenge of apocalyptic times”; and

16           WHEREAS, On Sunday, March 24, 2019, City Lights Booksellers and Publishers will  
17 celebrate the life and legacy of its founder on the day of Mr. Lawrence Ferlinghetti’s one-  
18 hundredth birthday; now, therefore, be it

19           RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco  
20 recognizes Mr. Lawrence Ferlinghetti for his inspiring lifetime of contributions to the literature  
21 and arts community of the world and proclaims March 24, 2019, as Lawrence Ferlinghetti Day  
22 in the City and County of San Francisco.

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