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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Chris Daly, Sevan Dufty
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WHEREAS, The USPS refuses to forward mail to tenants' new addresses when they
move out of SROs; and,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Chris Daly
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Resolution urging the United States Postal Service to recognize Single Room Occupancy as permanent low-cost housing for many San Franciscans, and to afford residents the right to receive their mail with the same security and privacy as tenants of traditional apartments.

June 15, 2004 Board of Supervisors — ADOPTED
Ayes: 11 - Alioto-Pier, Ammiano, Daly, Dufty, Gonzalez, Hall, Ma, Maxwell, McGoldrick, Peskin, Sandoval

File No. 040841

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED on June 15, 2004 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

Gloria L. Young
Clerk of the Board

Mayor Gavin Newsom