[Declaring Support for Urgent Funding for the United States Postal Service - Urging the United States Postal Service to Maintain Longstanding Delivery Standards and Services]

Resolution declaring the City and County of San Francisco’s support for urgent funding for the United States Postal Service in light of the coronavirus pandemic; and urging the Postal Service to maintain their longstanding delivery standards and services to ensure the well-being of our nation’s democracy.

WHEREAS, The United States Postal Service operates an essential service by providing uniform and equal mail services to all Americans; and

WHEREAS, Ahead of this November’s election, the United States Postal Service must continue to play an essential role in contributing to our nation’s democracy; and

WHEREAS, Due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the United States Postal Service has requested $25 billion in urgent funding; and

WHEREAS, The President of the United States has, at this time, stated opposition to providing additional funding to the United States Postal Service that would ensure the continued functioning of their essential services; and

WHEREAS, Due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, it is expected that absentee ballots will surge in popularity across the country during the upcoming November election; and

WHEREAS, The United States Postal Service has long treated all election mail as First Class mail, ensuring that election mail is delivered within the standard 2-5 day delivery time; and

WHEREAS, The United States Postal Service has informed States that they will be required to pay higher rates for election mail than they have previously been accustomed to; and

Supervisors Stefani; Walton, Fewer, Preston, Safai, Yee, Mandelman, Peskin, Ronen, Haney
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WHEREAS, The United States Postal Service will not automatically treat all election mail as First Class mail; and

WHEREAS, The United States Postal Service has informed States that sending election mail as Nonprofit Marketing Mail, which falls within a standard 3-10 day delivery time, will result in slower delivery times than previous election years; and

WHEREAS, Election officials across the country have long relied on Nonprofit Marketing Mail prices, more affordable than First Class mail prices, to ensure that they can provide election materials to voters in a cost-effective manner; and

WHEREAS, During the 2018 elections, the United States Postal Service Office of Inspector General found that 95.6% of election mail was delivered within 1-3 days, equivalent to First Class mail; and

WHEREAS, The United States Congress has currently provided $400 million in emergency funding to states for election functions during the coronavirus pandemic, while election officials across the country have continued to demand additional emergency funding; and

WHEREAS, The United States Postal Service forcing elections departments to pay First Class mail prices for election mail would create further strain on the operations of elections departments; and

WHEREAS, United States Postal Service documents from May 15, 2020, outlining equipment reductions nationwide, stated plans to decommission numerous Advanced Facer Canceller System machines, Delivery Bar Code Sorter machines, and Automated Flat Sorting Machines, which account for the vast majority of election mail processing, from United States Postal Service Processing and Distributions Centers across the country; and

WHEREAS, The United States Postal Service’s planned decommissioning of these machines would result in an 18.2% reduction of Advanced Facer Canceller System machines,
19.8% reduction in Delivery Bar Code Sorter machines, and 20.2% reduction in Automated Flat Sorting Machines nationwide; and

WHEREAS, The United States Postal Service plans to remove 1 Advanced Facer Canceller System machine, 5 Delivery Bar Code Sorter machines, and 1 Automated Flat Sorting Machine from their San Francisco Processing and Distribution Center; and

WHEREAS, Decommissioning these machines will result in a 20% reduction in Advanced Facer Canceller System machines, 20% reduction in Delivery Bar Code Sorter machines, and 25% reduction in Automated Flat Sorting Machines at the United States Postal Service’s San Francisco Processing and Distribution Center; and

WHEREAS, The Postmaster General has stated his intentions to cut overtime for Postal Service employees; and

WHEREAS, Overtime for Postal Service employees allows for the United States Postal Service to pay employees who may need to work extra hours, for the purpose of covering the shift of an ill coworker, covering the shift of a coworker who is unable to perform their duties due to the ongoing pandemic, to increasing staffing levels during surges in mail, such as during an election, and for other reasons; and

WHEREAS, It is essential for the United States Postal Service to continue providing normal overtime to its employees to ensure that surges in mail are met with necessary levels of service during the upcoming November election; and

WHEREAS, The United States Postal Service has recently removed letter collection boxes in States across the country ahead of the November election; and

WHEREAS, It is expected that the United States Postal Service will see a surge in absentee ballots ahead of this November’s election, resulting in increased election mail being dropped off at United States Postal Service letter collection boxes, in lieu of voting in person; and
WHEREAS, Voters in San Francisco have long relied on the United States Post Office to successfully participate in their local elections; nearly two-thirds of the San Franciscans who vote, do so through our local vote-by-mail system; in the most recent presidential election, more than 260,000 San Franciscans cast their ballot by mail, which represents more than half of San Francisco’s registered voters; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors considers the United States Postal Service an essential piece of our election infrastructure and consider any deliberate attempt to impede the function of the United States Postal Service to be an attempt to undermine democracy; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors urges the United States Congress to provide urgent funding to the United States Postal Service in light of the coronavirus pandemic and due to an expected surge in mail ahead of this November’s election; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors urges the United States Postal Service to continue applying First Class mail standards to all election mail; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors urges the United States Postal Service to postpone any decommissioning of mail sorting machines at the San Francisco Processing and Distribution Center and throughout the country; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors urges the United States Postal Service to halt removal of all letter collection boxes; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors recognizes that implementing any of these changes to the United States Postal Service’s longstanding services and standards, ahead of this November’s election, is equivalent to voter suppression; and, be it
FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors transmit a copy of this Resolution to the members of our Congressional delegation and to our City Lobbyist.
Resolution declaring the City and County of San Francisco’s support for urgent funding for the United States Postal Service in light of the coronavirus pandemic; and urging the Postal Service to maintain their longstanding delivery standards and services to ensure the well-being of our nation’s democracy.

August 25, 2020 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED
   Ayes: 11 - Fewer, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, Walton and Yee

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED on 8/25/2020 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution, not being signed by the Mayor within the time limit as set forth in Section 3.103 of the Charter, or time waived pursuant to Board Rule 2.14.2, became effective without her approval in accordance with the provision of said Section 3.103 of the Charter or Board Rule 2.14.2.

Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board

9/8/2020
Date