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October 26, 2023

The Honorable Louis DeJoy
Postmaster General
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20260

Dear Postmaster General DeJoy:

I write to reiterate my previously expressed concern regarding the United States Postal Service's (USPS) facility consolidations under the Delivering for America plan, as my previously stated fears appear to now be coming to fruition. As you know, in April 2021 USPS noticed that 18 facilities had been targeted for mail processing operation closures. This had previously been part of Phase 2 of the Network Rationalization Initiative (NRI), but had been indefinitely paused in May 2015 following bipartisan outrage.

Following the February 2022 consolidation of the Cape Girardeau Processing and Distribution Facility (P&DF), when all letter and large envelope mail sorting operations ceased in Cape Girardeau and were moved to the Saint Louis Processing and Distribution Center (P&DC), my office has received countless reports from constituents who are receiving mail days, weeks, or even months late throughout Missouri's 8th Congressional District. This has resulted in individuals having their utilities shut off because they didn't get their bills on time; going without needed medications because they are lost in the mail; losing passports and being subjected to identity fraud; and missing general correspondence.

The Cape Girardeau Post Office services all zip codes beginning with 636, 637, 638, and 639, spanning 18 of the 28 counties I represent. In hearing reports, everyone is frustrated from the USPS employees who are working incredibly long hours to the many individuals who are just trying to get their mail. This is putting USPS workers in potentially dangerous situations, with disgruntled patrons coming into the post office and carriers being confronted on their routes.

When trying to get to the bottom of the problem at hand, it is clear to me this situation is a result of the strategic decisions made regarding the Cape Girardeau processing facility. Letter mail is coming in from the Saint Louis P&DC unprocessed, leaving Cape Girardeau unable to do anything other than send it back to Saint Louis to be sorted, further delaying mail delivery. The Cape Girardeau office is short staffed and OSHA reports have been filed over unacceptable work conditions. Over 20 clerks and staffers have been put on standby following the February 2022 closure when carrier posts remain unfilled. This problem is prolific.

It has been over a year and a half since this consolidation took place. Is this level of operation considered acceptable for USPS? If not, what are USPS's plans to get operations back on track?

As we head into the holiday season, what are USPS's plans for the Cape Girardeau Post Office to ensure that staff doesn't become further overwhelmed and is prepared for the busy season? I hope you will agree that it is unacceptable that families are having their utilities shut off because utility bills are not reaching the intended recipients in a timely fashion.

I appreciate your attention to this important matter and look forward to receiving your prompt response by November 9, 2023.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Smith", written over a horizontal line.

Jason Smith
Member of Congress