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April 4, 2012

Mr. Patrick R. Donahoe
Postmaster General and Chief Executive Officer
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20260

Dear Postmaster General Donahoe:

I write to request that the United States Postal Service (USPS) delay proceeding forward with any closure or consolidations for all postal facilities until Congress has enacted comprehensive postal reform legislation. Specifically, I am requesting that you extend your self-imposed moratorium on any and all such closure and consolidation plans from May 15, 2012 until August 1, 2012.

It is without question that the USPS is facing major financial challenges, in part because of a steady decline in mail volume. In fact, the USPS has now lost over \$28 billion since 2007. This has occurred at a time when the USPS remains a central nexus in our national economy, operating at the center of a mailing industry that employs approximately eight million people nationwide – including nearly 38,000 Mainers – and generates approximately \$1 trillion annually in economic activity.

Given these realities, it is essential that Congress promptly debate and approve comprehensive postal reform legislation, and that this legislation develop the framework for a new, sustainable, and successful business model for the USPS into the 21st century. However, while Congress has made substantial progress in forming comprehensive postal reform legislation with bipartisan support, more work needs to be done.

On December 15, 2011, at the urging of Congress, you implemented a 5-month moratorium on the closure or consolidation of any post office or mail processing facility. This moratorium is scheduled to expire on May 15, 2012. I am writing to request you to extend this moratorium until August 1, 2012.

As Congress continues to move forward on postal reform legislation that will allow the Postal Service to succeed in the 21st century, it is vital that the Postal Service not pre-empt Congressional action by unilaterally progressing with the elimination of overnight delivery for first class mail, implemented in concert with major shutdowns of mail processing facilities and rural post offices.

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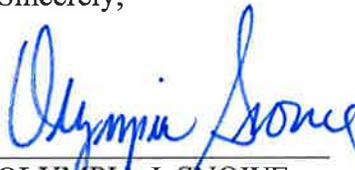
As you know, the original plan proposed by the USPS called for the closing of approximately 3,700 mostly rural post offices, the consolidation of 264 mail processing facilities, and eliminating overnight delivery for first class mail. This action will serve to drive away even more business in the future, further jeopardizing the USPS' financial viability. Indeed, the reportedly-approved consolidation of the Eastern Maine Processing and Distribution Facility in Hampden, Maine, will delay service throughout eastern, western, and northern Maine, causing irreparable harm to businesses, families, communities, and to the USPS itself.

Moving forward on this plan before Congress has a chance to act will seriously degrade service, drive away customers, and establish an untenable business model for the future – something that Congress is working to prevent. It would be simply unacceptable for the Postal Service to move ahead with draconian cuts that would seriously harm rural America, senior citizens, veterans, and disrupt the nation's economy.

It is paramount that the Postal Service work with Congress and the Administration to achieve a strong bipartisan consensus about the needed reforms and cost-saving measures that will reduce redundancies, improve efficiencies, and place the USPS back on a path towards solvency and sustainability. Therefore, I urge you to extend the moratorium until August 1, 2012

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to your timely reply.

Sincerely,



OLYMPIA J. SNOWE
United States Senator