Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 23, 2012

The Honorable John A. Boehner, Speaker
United States House of Representatives
H-232 The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
H-204 The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner and Leader Pelosi:

We are writing regarding the Postal Reform Act (H.R. 2309) and recent efforts to address the budget crisis facing the United States Postal Service.

In 2011, the Postal Service announced it was considering the closure or consolidation of 3,652 postal facilities, in addition to the more than 700 facilities being considered under a proposal submitted in 2009. We understand the urgent need to curb the Postal Service's annual deficits, which could exceed $21 billion annually in the near future; however, we fear the Postal Service may be misguided in targeting rural postal facilities as a means of addressing its shortfall.

The Postal Service faces tremendous challenges due to the changing nature of communication and will be forced to make tough choices moving forward. These decisions, though, must not jeopardize access to postal services on which millions of rural Americans rely each and every day.

The solutions proposed by the Postal Service will not resolve its long-term financial shortfall. In fact, according to the Postal Service's own data, the annual savings achieved by closing every one of the aforementioned post offices would not cover even the annual price tag of Cost-of-Living-Adjustments awarded last year to its employees.

We are seeking neither taxpayer dollars to bailout the Postal Service nor to tie the hands of decision makers. We simply ask for postal reform to focus on changes which provide the greatest savings and the least service disruption – not the least savings for the greatest disruption. The impact of closing a small-town post office puts tremendous strain on an entire community and the small businesses that rely on an efficient, reliable postal service. These impacts are only exacerbated in rural and isolated communities where alternative access points are not readily available, unlike urban areas where a wide range of alternatives may exist.

We acknowledge the Postal Service footprint is extensive, and it may be sensible to close certain facilities or consolidate some operations. But this process should be transparent, justifiable, and implemented with an appreciation for local and community input. During markup, we were pleased to see a provision added to H.R. 2309 which sought to defend

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rural post offices, but we would like to see additional changes when the bill comes to the floor. Such changes would include assurance small and rural post offices will not continue to be the Postal Service's primary target for closure and rural business and residents will not lose access to service.

We are confident concerns with H.R. 2309 will be carefully considered and Members will have the opportunity to weigh in throughout the legislative process. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on such an important matter, and share your commitment to balancing the Postal Service budget while continuing the highest degree of service to all areas of our nation.

Sincerely,

ADRIAN SMITH
Member of Congress

DENNY REHBERG
Member of Congress

CYNTHIA LUMMIS
Member of Congress

RICK BERG
Member of Congress

MARK AMODEI
Member of Congress

RICK CRAWFORD
Member of Congress

DAVID MCKINLEY
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