

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 18, 2011

The Honorable Patrick R. Donahoe
Postmaster General
U.S. Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW
Washington, DC 20260-0010

Mr. Donahoe,

On September 15, 2011, Deputy Postmaster General Ronald Stroman of the United States Postal Service (USPS) notified us of imminent Area Mail Processing (AMP) studies which would potentially close facilities across the country, including the Mack Robinson Processing & Distribution Center (P&DC) in Pasadena and the City of Industry P&DC in Industry, both in California. The Pasadena AMP will examine consolidating the Pasadena P&DC into the Los Angeles P&DC and forcing possible closure, while the Industry AMP will consider moving all of Industry P&DC's operations into the Santa Ana P&DC and closing that facility.

We strongly urge USPS to keep the Mack Robinson and the City of Industry facilities open and not move mail processing activities away through consolidation. We are concerned that such a move would place significant economic and financial hardships on the San Gabriel Valley's many businesses, thousands of residents, and hundreds of postal employees.

The local and efficient delivery of mail is central to the businesses in the San Gabriel Valley that provide our jobs and fuel our economy. The City of Industry is home to more than 2,500 businesses, many engaged in manufacturing, logistics, and warehouse industries that employ thousands of people and rely on timely and reliable mail service to conduct their business. Pasadena is a commercial center for aerospace and scientific research industries that need consistent postal deliveries to succeed. Both Mack Robinson's and the City of Industry's mail processing facilities are critical economic assets for their cities, the surrounding communities, and Southern California. Their closure will likely cause degraded postal service for San Gabriel Valley residents and businesses as their mail is rerouted to distant facilities.

If the mail processing work done at Mack Robinson and the City of Industry is moved elsewhere, it will place critically-needed local jobs at risk at a time when unemployment is already in the double-digits. Seven-hundred and eighty-two career employees work at the Industry facility, and two-hundred and thirty-four career employees work at the Pasadena facility. The relocation and retirement of such a large number of people would cause great hardship for our local economy and the affected families. Our area already suffers from high unemployment, and we cannot weather the loss of any more high quality jobs.

Under current collective bargaining agreements with USPS craft employees, USPS would be required to relocate these employees to locally available positions, if these facilities are closed. Given the shortage of available USPS jobs in our area, we request that you provide to the undersigned detailed answers on what exactly will happen to the hundreds of workers and their families who would be left unemployed by closure, and to what facilities they would be transferred.

Of further concern is USPS's announcement on August 12, 2011 that it will seek Congressional authority to abrogate current labor contracts and layoff employees as it sees fit. On behalf of the more than one thousand career employees who work in the Industry and Pasadena facilities, we ask for clear and specific answers about what will happen to our postal workers if these facilities are closed, and whether or not they and their families can expect current labor agreements to be respected.

Additionally, we would like to know what would happen to the properties where the facilities are currently located and whether they would be kept within USPS or sold.

We recognize the significant financial strain USPS is under, and that USPS must take action to ensure its financial health. However, there is no clear evidence that eliminating the mail processing operations at Mack Robinson and the City of Industry will cut costs for USPS. In fact, many questions remain as to the possible expenses of transporting mail greater distances and making the needed changes at other USPS facilities to bear the load. USPS's labor agreements, if respected, require that any employees impacted by the consolidation have the option of staying on the USPS payroll at another facility. This is a cost-shift, not a cost-savings. As a result, the cost savings due to consolidations have historically been quite small for USPS.

We remain convinced that a larger, more comprehensive approach to addressing USPS's finances is the most appropriate way to ensure the long-term fiscal solvency while minimizing the loss of postal service and local jobs for our communities.

The current legal requirement that USPS prefund its retirement health benefit program by \$5.5 billion per year is the one of the largest sources of USPS's financial woes and is a unique burden among federal entities. The United States Postal Service Pension Obligation Recalculation and Restoration Act (H.R. 1351), of which we are cosponsors, would allow USPS to use the funds it has previously overpaid in retirement benefit liabilities to meet the onerous \$5.5 billion prefunding requirement, while minimizing any negative impact on its workforce or quality of service.

We also want to ensure that the USPS conducts the studies in a completely transparent and fair way. We ask that the USPS follow all current statutes and internal USPS guidelines to the fullest extent when conducting these studies. Section 302 of the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act requires USPS, in the AMP process, to "afford affected persons ample opportunity to provide input on the decision and take such comments into account in making a final decision." Generally, USPS has complied with this requirement in part by scheduling a public meeting to solicit input within 45 days of the AMP study announcement.

We request that USPS do the same with the AMP studies for Mack Robinson and the City of Industry, so that the affected communities are given the opportunity to express any concerns they might have about a potential consolidation. Additionally, we request that USPS, when it releases the decisions, provide the public with a copy of the studies' data, so that the community can evaluate the evidence supporting USPS's recommendations.

We also ask, as the elected representatives for the area affected by the potential closures, that USPS meet with us and share the complete results of the AMP study, without redaction, in advance of the public meeting.

We urge you to reexamine the necessity of studying consolidation at the Mack Robinson and City of Industry mail sorting facilities, since their closures would lower the quality of local postal service and remove good-paying jobs from an already struggling local economy. We look forward an expedited reply on this important matter.

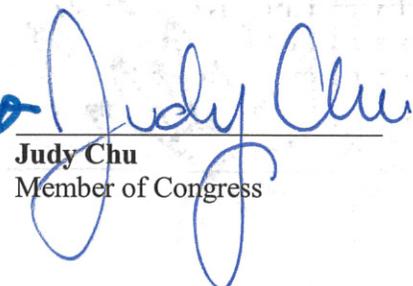
Sincerely,



Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress



Grace J. Napolitano
Member of Congress



Judy Chu
Member of Congress