

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 9, 2019

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-221 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, and Minority Leader McCarthy:

Any effort by the U.S. Postal Service to resume consolidations of mail processing facilities could have a significant impact on Arizona. We request that you ensure that any postal legislation considered in your body include provisions to require the Postal Service to collect updated data before considering any additional processing facility consolidations.

Eight years ago, the U.S. Postal Service announced a flawed consolidation plan that weakened the ability of consumers and businesses to receive mail in a timely fashion. Chief among its miscalculations was the theoretical savings to be achieved by eliminating Tucson's Postal Processing and Distribution Center. If that full closure had occurred, the result would have greatly diminished service for more than a million customers in the growing Tucson region and all of southern Arizona.

The Postal Service was only able to partially consolidate the Tucson plan, but even that partial closure has caused delays for the delivery of crucial mail including Veterans benefits and medications. We are confident that a new analysis of the data using updated criteria to evaluate mail service in the greater Tucson area will show that additional consolidation of processing facilities is not warranted. However, recent news reports regarding the Postal Service's new business plan indicate an interest in restarting consolidations. It is critical that the Postal Service not begin any consolidation effort without first gathering new data.

To remedy the situation and create an equitable process for any future consolidation decisions, we encourage your consideration of the following recommendations in any postal reform legislation:

- Require a two-year moratorium on any new postal processing facility consolidations.
- If the Postal Service wants to resume consolidations, require an update of Area Mail Processing feasibility studies that incorporate an expanded set of criteria the Postal Service

must follow. The expanded consolidation criteria, at a minimum, should take into consideration the impact of the following factors:

- The population growth of a state and region;
- The local economy and its need for access to mail service;
- The need for timely mail service for affected populations, including small businesses, nonprofit organizations, tribal communities, veterans and senior citizens, and those who depend on the mail for the delivery of prescription medications;
- The vote-by-mail process and the timely ability to deliver ballots by mail according to deadlines established under applicable state law;
- Ability to attract and retain an efficient and effective postal workforce;
- The environment and air quality, related to driving distance between consolidating and receiving postal processing facility.
- The postal service standards in place and the service performance in the area served by the processing facility.

In addition, the criteria should address prior deficiencies in the public notification process and community appeal, including:

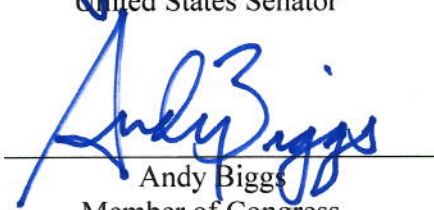
- Require public notification prior to entering into a new Area Mail Processing feasibility study and following the completion of the study;
- Conduct publically announced and locally held hearings on the findings of the Area Mail Processing feasibility study;
- Provide a process for a community to appeal a consolidation decision to Congress and the Postal Regulatory Commission;
- Require the Postal Service to reverse previous partial consolidation decisions made after a new Area Mail Processing feasibility study is conducted and finds the facility needs to be restored in order to successfully meet service standards and performance in the area;
- Restore the local postmark when an Area Mail Processing feasibility study is updated and it is determined that consolidation is no longer feasible.

We appreciate your commitment to resolving the long-standing issues with the U.S. Postal Service through postal reform measure and look forward to working with you to see it to conclusion.

Sincerely,



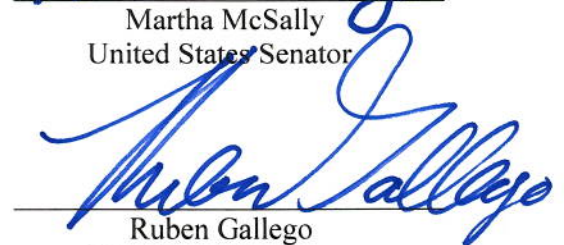
Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator



Andy Biggs
Member of Congress



Martha McSally
United States Senator



Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress



Paul Gosar
Member of Congress



Raúl Grijalva
Member of Congress



Ann Kirkpatrick
Member of Congress



Tom O'Halleran
Member of Congress



Greg Stanton
Member of Congress

cc:

Senator Ron Johnson, Chairman, Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee

Senator Gary Peters, Ranking Member, Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee

Senator Jerry Moran, Chairman, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies

Senator Thomas R. Carper, Ranking Member, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

Congressman Elijah Cummings, Chairman, House Oversight and Reform Committee

Congressman Jim Jordan, Ranking Member, House Oversight and Reform Committee

Congressman Gerry Connolly, Chairman, Subcommittee on Government Operations

Congressman Mark Meadows, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Government Operations

Postmaster General and Chief Executive Officer Megan J. Brennan