United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 2, 2012

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

Dear Postmaster General Donahoe,

We write you today to urge you to extend the current moratorium on the closing of post offices and mail processing facilities. As you know, the current moratorium is scheduled to end on May 15th.

On April 25th, the United States Senate passed S. 1789, the 21st Century Postal Service Act. We believe this bipartisan legislation will provide the United States Postal Service (USPS) with the flexibility and tools it needs to get back on the road to financial stability. The Senate included within this legislation a Sense of the Senate that the USPS should extend the current moratorium until enactment of the postal reform legislation.

While the USPS faces significant financial challenges, we believe that post offices provide social and economic benefits, particularly to rural communities. Rural citizens depend on the mail to manage their lives and stay connected with their government. A 2011 Commerce Department report shows that over 30 percent of U.S households did not have broadband Internet access at home and over 25 percent of households did not even use the Internet. Postal mail remains the one universal service connecting the American people to commerce, government, news, and social and civic institutions.

Preserving and maintaining a viable Postal Service and its ability to continue to serve the entire nation is an indispensable element for the entire postal industry, its workers, and most importantly the many small businesses and communities around the country who depend on a strong and reliable USPS.

We are deeply concerned that the closing of these postal facilities prior to postal reform legislation being enacted would be devastating to communities around the country. This moratorium will provide the time needed to enact the reforms in the 21st Century Postal Service Act. Again, we strongly urge you to extend the current moratorium on the closing of postal facilities.

Sincerely,

Mark Begich

John Boozman

Bernard Sanders

Mary L. Landrieu

Jon Tester

E. Benjamin Nelson

[illegible]

Richard Blumenthal

[illegible]

Jack Reed

Barbara A. Mikulski

Claire McCaskill

Max Baucus

Jeanne Shaheen

Amy Klobuchar

Kent Conrad

Dianne Feinstein

Herb Kohl

Charles Schumer

Mark Udall

Jeffrey A. Merkley

Al Franken

Frank R. Lautenberg

Tom Udall

[illegible]

Ben Cardin

Dick Durbin

Debbie Stabenow

Ron Wyden

Patty Murray

Bob Casey, Jr.

Kay R. Hagan

Kirsten E. Gillibrand