



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
POSTAL REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, DC 20268-0001

RUTH Y. GOLDWAY  
CHAIRMAN

December 12, 2011

Dear Member of Congress:

The U.S. Postal Service recently released a proposal to revise current service standards for First-Class Mail, Periodicals, Package Services and Standard Mail. The most significant revisions would eliminate overnight service for First-Class Mail and Periodicals, and would instead provide 2 and 3 day delivery service. The intent of these service standard changes is to capture significant cost savings from the consolidation of the Postal Service's mail processing and transportation networks. By law, the Postal Service is required to ask the Postal Regulatory Commission for an advisory opinion on any change in nationwide service it proposes. On December 5<sup>th</sup>, the Postal Service filed such a request, and the Commission opened Docket N2012-1 to examine the request. Given that constituents may have questions about the process, or a specific closing or consolidation in their community, I wanted to make you aware of the Commission's role.

**Overall Process.** The Commission will review the revised service standards and all justifications presented by the Postal Service in Docket N2012-1. By law, the Commission applies the Administrative Procedure Act to all proceedings. The Commission will provide an opportunity for comment by any interested members of the public, receive testimony at public hearings, and ultimately render an advisory opinion based on evidence developed in the case. Among other things, the Commission will examine the cost savings associated with the proposal and the potential impact of the changes in service on both senders and recipients. It is important to note, however, that individual closures and consolidations of mail processing facilities are not subject to review by the Commission under title 39 of the United States Code.

**Individual facility closures and consolidations.** For constituents concerned about a specific facility, the Postal Service is prohibited by law from closing or consolidating any processing or logistics facilities without using procedures designed to provide public notice and input<sup>1</sup>. More specifically, the Postal Service must:

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<sup>1</sup> Pub. L. 109-435 §302 (c)(3)(D)

- Provide adequate public notice to communities potentially affected by a proposed rationalization decision;
- Make available information regarding any service changes in the affected communities, any other effects on customers, any effects on Postal Service employees, and any cost savings;
- Afford affected persons ample opportunity to provide input on the proposed decision; and
- Take such comments into account in making a final decision.

Anyone seeking to challenge whether the Postal Service followed the appropriate procedures may pursue such a claim in the United States District Court.

For constituents interested in participating in the Commission's review of the service standard change proposal, there are two primary avenues available.

- **Formal Participation.** Any interested person may write to the Commission's Office of Public Affairs and Government Relations (PAGR) at the address listed below. PAGR may also be contacted via email at [PRC-PAGR@prc.gov](mailto:PRC-PAGR@prc.gov), or by phone at 202-789-6800. PAGR can answer questions regarding legal requirements for actively participating in the Docket N2012-1 as an intervenor. The deadline for filing to participate as an intervenor is December 30, 2011.
- **Informal Comments.** They do not become a part of the formal record of the case, however, they are made available to the Commissioners and for viewing by the public, on site at the Commission.

You may be interested to know that the Commission has appointed a **public representative** to represent the interests of the public in this case, Mr. Chris Laver. Should your constituents wish to share their concerns, he may be reached via email at [Chris.Laver@prc.gov](mailto:Chris.Laver@prc.gov) or phone at 202-789-6800.

I hope you find this information helpful. If you have any questions concerning these matters or would like to be briefed in person, please feel free to contact the Commission's Director of Public Affairs and Government Relations, Ann Fisher at 901 New York Avenue NW, Suite 200; Washington DC 20268, via email at [Ann.Fisher@prc.gov](mailto:Ann.Fisher@prc.gov) or phone at 202-789-6803.

Sincerely,

  
Ruth Y. Goldway