

To: The Postal Regulatory Commission:

I am writing with regard to the proposed increase in mail rates by 41%. While I understand the need to close the budget gap as much as possible increasing the mail rate would be a severe detriment to rural Alaska.

Rural Alaska is made up of over 500,000 square miles of roadless area. Therefore the majority of our groceries are brought into this area through the postal system via airfreight. This area struggles with a high level of unemployment, up to 35%. This increase in the mail rate would make living in this area impossible for the whole population currently residing here. For example, a gallon of milk currently averages \$9 prior to the increase in postage rates. This increase would raise the price of that gallon of milk to over \$12.

We all benefit from some form of government subsidy, whether it is the ferry system, railroad, parks or highways. This is the way that rural Alaska receives their transportation subsidy from the government.

I ask that you do not increase the postal rate. It will mean the death of rural areas in our country and put further pressure on our declining economy.