

## **United States Postal Service Station Office Closing**

### **Public Hearing**

**September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2009**

Good Afternoon, my name is Aurelia Greene and I am the Deputy Borough President of the Bronx and I am here today to express the views of the Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. and the 1.4 million residents of the Bronx.

We are deeply concerned about the news that the United States Postal service is considering the elimination of seven post office facilities in the Bronx, amounting to 17% of all of the post offices in the county. These closures run counter to the population increases experienced in Bronx County over the last fifteen years, which amounted to a 11% increase from 1990 to 2000 and another 4.4% through 2008 for an additional 59,253 people.

Every post office is the heart of a neighborhood and perhaps the defining center of neighborhoods the way they are to villages and towns across the country. They provide more than services and points from which to distribute letters and packages.

The urban area known as the Bronx is densely developed as a pedestrian centered conglomerate of many villages, known locally as neighborhoods, whose very essence is defined by the presence of institutions such as the transit station, the post office, the local police precinct and clusters of retail development. Of all the ingredients of a neighborhood, the post office is one the most relevant facilities to the local citizen. It is not only a service location for the distribution of mail but the most local representation of the government and how it serves the people.

In a pedestrian environment, such as the Bronx, the post office is used by virtually every citizen, from the oldest to the youngest and the richest to the poorest. All stand in line in the lobby of the post office to meet their most routine postal needs and the conveyance of important documents. We should recognize that the purchase of postal money orders is one of the most important financial services available to our poorest neighbors, who depend on them for paying the monthly rent and other bills. And they generally arrive there on foot traveling from their

homes or businesses. As such a trip to the post office of any great length would become a great hardship.

Six of the proposed locations for closure are approximately a half a mile or more away from the nearest other postal office, further exacerbating the hardship people and businesses experience in their travel to retrieve mail and purchase other services on a daily basis. The closure of Melcourt also ignores the redevelopment of the Melrose Commons Area, which has seen the construction of over three thousand new housing units over the last few years, as well as the construction of the new Boricua College Campus. The closure of the Crotona Office would leave the vast Boston Road north/south corridor from East 167<sup>th</sup> Street to Bronx Park South without a postal outlet, in one of the most historically noted and resurgent areas of the Bronx. The Hillside Station closure would represent the most egregious hardship, as this facility is even further away than a half a mile from any other outlet.

We therefore strongly request that the Postal Service reconsider closing any of the seven proposed outlet in the borough.