

December 13, 2010

Ruth Goldway  
Postal Regulatory Commission  
901 New York Ave NW  
Suite 200  
Washington DC 20268-0001

Dear Chairwoman Goldway,

I write on behalf of the University of Oregon classified staff to ask for a re-consideration of the decision by the US Postal Service (USPS) to close the EMU Post Office Branch at the University of Oregon on December 31, 2010. I am a senator representing the Classified Staff at the University of Oregon. Classified staff at UO provide the services to generate power and heat, answer the telephones, process the payroll, serve in the kitchen and clean the rooms in housing, clear the leaves and ice from the sidewalks, etc. Classified staff are vital members of the campus community. Many of our classified staff not only work in departments on campus that relies heavily on the services, but are themselves students while working full-time; they juggle classes around their work schedule and use the 10-15 min. break or half-hour lunch, to do the quick run to the post office as they may start work as early as 7 a.m. and their day ends around 6 p.m. Classified staff cannot afford to miss work or class to go to a post office farther away, i.e. the close proximity and affordability the post office makes a difference. Moreover, many classified staff cannot afford to pay more for sending mail, shipping packages, and/or renting a P.O. Box if the University EMU Post Office is replaced by a private mail service.

I am from Singapore; I can identify as well to the experience of international students who send and receive large packages at the UO campus post office that would be difficult or impossible to access if relocated. The University of Oregon, as the state's flagship institution with its current 25,000+ students, faculty and staff, is a magnet that continues to attract visitors from around the world with our numerous academic programs, sports and extra-curricular activities on campus. Many Americans who have travelled overseas know and can identify with the experience of the difficulty in expressing one's needs where English is not the native language. In Singapore and in many countries, the post office remains a public entity to serve the needs of community it serves. I know too the experience of students, particularly students and visiting scholars of the American English Institute who encounter the difficulty of trying to communicate in English to get the help or services they need, the difficulty to get from point A to point B sans car, the difficulty trying to orientate oneself and navigate having to rely on public transportation, to orientate oneself to unfamiliar and new surroundings – particularly when you are in a foreign country, and particularly if you have only limited knowledge of the local language. In the fifteen years I have been at the University of Oregon, I have often been asked for directions by foreign visitors, visiting parents and family members of international students, and international scholars who are on campus for a few days, or a short visit. I am multi-lingual, am conversant in several languages and have visited over 100 places in 21 countries - and with my collective travel experiences, I have found these words to have universal meaning in the traveler's lexicon: "bus," "bank," "airport," "taxi" and "post office." By and large, these words have universal understanding around the world even when one has limited knowledge of the local language. Those who have asked to be directed to "post office" at the University EMU campus post office very much appreciated learning that there was indeed a post office

on campus, and that it is a full-service post office with employees at our University EMU campus post office who have, over the years, developed the specialized skills and experience with foreign mailings and express mailings, answering the questions and providing the services they need.

The University of Oregon's enrollment has grown in past years and as a campus community; we will continue to grow in the coming years. With the national spotlight on our football program and national and international recognition as Track Town USA, the University of Oregon enrolls more than 1,400 international students from nearly 85 countries, and sponsors 165 study abroad programs in about 95 countries with more than 1,000 UO students participating in study or internships abroad each year, I would recommend that the USPS also consider expanding the University EMU campus post office services to include Passport Application Acceptance as the University campus post office offers an ideal location to further add value to the profitability that it already generates - and to contribute to the success of Passport Day in the USA 2010 that brought in over \$218 million in revenue.

The United States Postal Service is a valued institution and its public mission : *"... through the personal, educational, literary, and business correspondence of the people. It [the Postal Service] shall provide prompt, reliable, and efficient services to patrons in all areas and shall render postal services to all communities."* is one we who are members of the University of Oregon campus community, can relate to. As an elected representative of Classified Staff working in collaboration with University of Oregon students, faculty and staff who are petitioning to repeal the decision to close our University EMU campus post office, I am looking forward to working toward a successful resolution that preserves the value of a full-service post office with employees at our University EMU campus post office who have unique skills and the experience that adds value to the United States Postal Services mission of a government agency that is service related , that is to say, the University EMU campus post office is a representative USPS service-related entity on campus that we all value as an important asset to our campus community.

Sincerely

Theodora Ko Thompson  
Senator for Classified Staff | Classified Staff Training and Development Advisory Committee  
Admissions Specialist  
University of Oregon

cc: Congressman Peter DeFazio  
cc: Senator Ron Wyden  
cc: Senator Jeff Merkley  
cc: Nathan Tublitz, President – UO Senate