

Postal Regulatory Commission
Office of the Chief Admin. Officer

OCT 11 2011 BEFORE THE
POSTAL RATE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC 20268

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In the Matter of:

Ionia, Missouri 65335
Post Office State ZIP Code

POSTAL REGULATORY
COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Docket No: A2011-64

William Smart, Petitioner(s)

PARTICIPANT STATEMENT

1. Petitioner(s) are appealing the Postal Service's Final Determination concerning the Ionia, Missouri post office. The Final Determination was posted July 29, 2011.
(date)

2. In accordance with applicable law, 39 U.S.C. § 404(d)(5), the Petitioner(s) request the Postal Regulatory Commission to review the Postal Service's determination on the basis of the record before the Postal Service in the making of the determination.

3. Petitioners: Please set out below the reasons why you believe the Postal Service's Final Determination should be reversed and returned to the Postal Service for further consideration. (See pages of the Instructions for an outline of the kinds of reasons the law requires us to consider.) Please be as specific as possible. Please continue on additional paper if you need more space and attach the additional page(s) to this form.

See Attached

Section 101 (b) of Title 39 of the U. S. Code reads as follows

“The Postal Service shall provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal service to rural areas and small towns where post office are not self-sustaining. ***No small post office shall be closed solely for operating at a deficit***, it being the specific intent of the Congress that effective postal services be insured to residents of both urban and rural communities.”

It is the belief of the residents of our community that this is a major contributing factor to the Ionia, Missouri, Post Office being closed. Our Post Office is only open three hours a day, Monday through Friday, and two hours on Saturday. Therefore, it cannot be a major financial burden on the Postal Service.

The meeting to discuss the possible closing of the Ionia Post Office was held on February 24, 2011, at 11:00 a.m. when many of our residents were at work. Therefore, citizens could not be present to voice their opinion. Those who were there left with the impression that the decision had already been made and their opinions fell on deaf ears.

Some of the facts listed in the “Final Determination to Close the Ionia Post Office” (document number 1368007-65335) are incorrect. In section I. Responsiveness to Community Postal Needs, it talks about a study being conducted. It is my belief that part of the facts of that study were collected in early February. During that time our community was snow bound due to a 21 inch snow fall. For two days no one could get out of, or into, Ionia, much less get to the Post Office which, by the way, was closed. Therefore, the volume of business definitely had to suffer during that time.

In section II. Effect on the Community, it states that Ionia is located in Henry County. I am not sure where this came from as Ionia is located in Benton County. It also states there are no businesses in our community. Businesses include Ark Manufacturing, Producers Exchange (a major grain handler for Central Missouri), Beeson's Garage, Southard's Small Engine Repair, and All American Heating and Cooling. I know these places of business, as well as the United Methodist Church, feel services of the Ionia Post Office are vital to their business. It also states that our community is made up of “unemployed, farmers, disabled veterans, and those who commute to work.” There are very few unemployed in our town. Of course, many of our citizens commute to work. We attempt to help our community grow by offering a small town atmosphere to those who work in surrounding areas. Closing the Post Office will have a negative effect on trying to get new citizens in our community.

Our citizens are told that online services of the Postal Department are available. There is only one problem with this statement --- over 80% of our home do not have access to a computer!

We would appreciate any consideration you could give to this matter.