

BEFORE THE  
POSTAL RATE COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, DC 20268

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In the Matter of:

INGLESIDE      MARYLAND      21644  
Post Office      State      ZIP Code

POSTAL REGULATORY  
COMMISSION  
Docket No: A2011-99  
SPECIAL SECRETARY

CHRISTOPHER VAUGHT, Petitioner(s)

PARTICIPANT STATEMENT

1. Petitioner(s) are appealing the Postal Service's Final Determination concerning the INGLESIDE, MD post office. The Final Determination was posted AUGUST 15, 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.

1) PLEASE SEE ATTACHED PAGE(S).

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We are hereby petitioning to appeal the "Final Determination to Close the Ingleside, MD Post Office, and Extend Service by Rural Route Carrier", Docket #1367944-21544, as posted by Dean J. Granholm, Vice President of Delivery and Post Office Operations on August 15<sup>th</sup> 2011.

This petition to appeal is due to the fact that this determination to close the Ingleside, MD Post Office was arbitrary, capricious, an abuse of discretion, and not in accordance with applicable laws. This determination to close the Ingleside, MD Post Office is also unsupported by substantial evidence in the record.

Initially the determination to close the Ingleside, MD Post Office was stated by the Postal Service to be due to their baseless claim that the Post Office structure and customers were being poisoned by chemicals used on the adjoining farm fields. This false claim was later retracted by the Postal Service. Attempts to apologize for the false statements were made, while the Postal Service authorities arbitrarily changed their stated claim for closing the Ingleside Post Office to one of "Economic Savings".

This sudden and capricious changing of stated reasons for closing our community Post Office is in direct violation of Federal Law which prohibits the Postal Service from permanently closing a small post office just for economic savings, under Title 39 of United States Code 404(b).

The Postal Service authorities have arbitrarily changed their "reasons" for wanting to close our Post Office from one that was admittedly false and baseless, to one that is prohibited by Federal Law, which is a direct abuse of discretion and authority under current law.

The Postal Service claim that closing the Ingleside, MD Post Office will result in "Economic Savings" is unsupported by substantial evidence in the record. The Postal Service's written determination to close cites a "Total Annual Cost" for the Ingleside Post Office of \$32,515, with a suggested "Total Annual Savings" after closure of \$29,219. I believe this "estimate" as put forth by the Postal Service is intentionally false, incomplete, and misleading. No where to be found in this "annual savings breakdown" are the additional costs for labor, daily fuel, vehicle maintenance, registration fees, etc., that will be needed to pick up and deliver mail throughout the community, when the community is denied the ability to pick up and deliver their own mail to the local post office at their convenience. Also curiously missing from these "economic savings estimates", are the additional costs that will be required to purchase, install, and lease space for the "Centralized Box units (CBU)"S, which the Postal Service suggests will now be needed by customers to prevent their mail from being vandalized, once it is no longer allowed to be kept safe at the Ingleside, MD Post Office. Obviously the "facts" the Postal Service have relied upon to make their determination to close, have not been established.

We believe the Ingleside, MD Post Office is one of the most economically efficient offices with the US postal system. The fact is there is currently no other Post Office within the entire US Postal system that services a larger geographic area with fewer postal employees, and if you doubt this fact, please just offer one example as proof? You would also be hard pressed to show us another Post Office anywhere with lower facility costs, including rents, leases, maintenance, and taxes.

Clearly the determination to close the Ingleside, MD Post Office is not based upon the false claim of chemical poisoning or unlawful and unproven economic savings, but rather appears to be based solely upon an arbitrary and capricious abuse of discretion.

Closing of the Ingleside, MD Post Office will have a negative impact on our community, and the Postal Service's arbitrary statements to the contrary have not been proven to the satisfaction of anyone within the community. Our community contains elderly and minority residents who do not drive, and currently walk to the post office for their required postal business. Relocating the Post Office another 3.5 miles away will prohibit these residents from being able to independently conduct their own postal business. Please review the suggestions below put forth by the Postal Service that these residents should:

- 1) Install personal mail boxes that they currently do not need.
- 2) Put hand written little notes within these new boxes for their new mail delivery persons to read when they want to conduct postal business.
- 3) Then set at home all day, or at certain times of the day, and wait for their mail delivery person to visit their mail boxes and read their notes.

4) Listen for the mail delivery person to honk their delivery vehicle horns, so that the elderly customers can scurry down to their mail boxes in all sorts of weather to conduct their postal business through the delivery vehicle window.

This may not seem like a negative impact on the community to people who live in larger urban areas, where the next nearest Post Office is only a few city blocks away, and taxpayer funded public transportation is an option. It is very much a negative impact in rural areas where the next nearest Post Office is several miles away, and there is NO taxpayer funded public transportation available.

The Ingleside, MD Post Office currently serves citizens throughout a large geographic area, including customers like myself who have physical home addresses outside of Ingleside, MD. This post office is not just the *most* convenient for many area citizens; it is also the *only* convenient location for many of us. This location not only serves as our only convenient Post Office, but also as our only location for the community bulletin board. This Post Office is also required for posting and distribution of Government forms and notices, (which would require additional printing and distribution costs, if no longer available directly at our local Post office).

I personally use the Ingleside, MD Post office to send First Class Mail International packages on a routine basis. This type transaction can not be accomplished through the window of the postal delivery vehicles as suggested by the Postal Service authorities within their written determination to close. These type transactions are complicated by the requirements for accurate package weights and dimensions, as well as signature witnessing, and as such, can not even be completed online through the USPS website. These transactions are best conducted at the local Post Office, which is under threat of being taken away.

Current US law requires "that the Postal Service shall provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to rural areas, communities and small towns where post offices are not self sustaining". Discussions with our current US Congressional Representatives regarding the establishment of the US Postal Service in our founding Constitution, suggest that individual post office closing determinations will continue to be contentious, with potential litigation depending upon the outcome of current legislative proposals pending within the US House of Representatives. I suggest that at the minimum, the U.S. Postal Regulatory Commission, and the US Postal Service, cancel or delay the closing of the Ingleside, MD Post office, until final outcome of the pending legislation is determined.

Sincerely,  
Christopher Vaught  
PO Box 15  
Ingleside, MD 21644

