

July 20, 2016

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Postal Regulatory Commission
Re: IM2016-1
901 NEW YORK AVENUE NW, SUITE 200
WASHINGTON, DC 20268-0001

Ladies and Gentlemen;

I am writing today regarding Docket IM2016-1, to tell you how terminal dues policies that discount shipments from China and other Asian countries has negatively impacted my small home business. I implore you to stop these unfair discounting practices, as they are destroying the free market of ecommerce and damaging my business and millions of other small businesses across America!

I painstakingly hand craft everything I sell. I make one of kind jewelry pieces with care and quality components, then sell my creations on eBay and Amazon. For years my small artisan business has been suffering the effects of competing with unethical foreign merchants who sell fake goods as quality gemstones (plastic or glass being sold as gems). Everything I sell is real and of good quality. It is very challenging to compete with fake gemstone pendants selling for one twentieth what I charge. The market is already skewed with terribly unfair advantage to dishonest Chinese merchants willing to lie about what they sell.

But add on top of this, the unfair advantage of Chinese merchants paying far less postage than I do, and my business is crippled. I work 12 hrs a day every day and I still fight a losing battle. In a marketplace where China and other Asian countries pay normal undiscounted international postal rates, my honest small American business will have a fighting chance. I do not understand why the decision to offer these terminal dues discounts to China/Asia was ever made! There is one outcome from this practice: damage to American small businesses which translates to damaging the American economy in several ways.

If these terminal dues discounts were ended, it would level one large aspect of ecommerce competition: the factor of shipping costs. I believe that ecommerce venues would change almost overnight, with billions of fake poor quality items being shipped from China disappearing or at least raising prices to include the cost of shipping.

I understand our United States Postal Service is losing millions to billions of dollars annually on these often fake poor quality wares being shipped to the US from China. And their volume in the mail system is growing daily. I also understand that what I have to pay for postage is increasing because of this massive financial loss for USPS. How is this even legal? It is clear it is not fair competition in any way.

While I am sharing my concerns with you today as a small business owner, I would also like to make you aware of how this has impacted me as an online consumer. I am spending less money than ever before online. Why? Because I have now had so many bad experiences with dishonest Asian merchants selling fake goods that I am discouraged from buying things online site unseen. Amazon has altered their listing formats so that, as a shopper, I am not even made aware I am purchasing something that will ship from China. Since I can never know the source of what I am buying, and I know the market is now flooded with fake goods from China, I simply don't buy this way anymore. I shop far less often and buy goods in person instead, where I can inspect the item. I am not alone in this trend- my neighbors share similar changes to their shopping practices.

We have created a monster by giving China/Asian countries unfair postal rate advantages and they have now flooded and destroyed our ecommerce venues, quite often with questionable goods.

Please level the playing field. Please support fair free market ecommerce with no special advantage for foreign merchants. Please end discounts on postal fees for Chinese and Asian merchants. It is not enough to lessen the discount they are getting. I implore you to END the discount they are getting. I do not believe this is fair or legal.

Sincerely,
Marjorie Alexander, Puppy Love Jewelry