

Murphy, DeLauro Call for Vote on Bill to Cut Wasteful Spending, Not Jobs from Postal Service

Urge Action on Postal Reforms
Before Wallingford, Stamford Centers Close

WASHINGTON-In

response to a final notice that the United States Postal Service (USPS) will close mail processing facilities in Wallingford and Stamford, Congressman Chris Murphy and Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro today called on Speaker of the House John Boehner to immediately schedule a vote on legislation to reform the postal service by cutting wasteful spending without cutting jobs or critical services.

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USPS has delayed implementation of these closures until May 15, 2012 in order to provide time for Congress to act on legislation that could potentially reduce the need for the closures. Murphy and DeLauro are co-sponsors of a bill that would fix the Postal Service's retiree health benefits requirements and pension overpayments, which would reduce their operating costs by billions of dollars and save jobs and services in Connecticut and across the country.

"Across

Connecticut we have heard loud and clear from our constituents that preserving USPS should be a top priority of Congress," wrote Murphy and DeLauro. "Real jobs and livelihoods are at stake, as is the vitality and well-being of businesses and everyday Americans who rely heavily on a fully-functioning Postal Service. We urge you to act immediately to schedule a vote on a bill that fixes USPS' retiree health benefits requirements and pension overpayments as well as saves much-needed services and jobs."

Full
text of the letter:

March 6, 2012

The Honorable John Boehner

Speaker of the House

H-232, The Capitol

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner:

We recently received final notice from the United States Postal Service (USPS) that two area mail processing facilities in Connecticut - the Southern Connecticut Processing and Distribution Center in Wallingford and the Stamford Processing and Distribution Center - will be closed, along with 223 other facilities across the country. Yet, the USPS has delayed implementation of these closures until May 15, 2012 in order to provide time for Congress to act on legislation that could potentially remove the need for this harmful action. That is why we are writing to urge you to schedule a floor vote immediately on a realistic, bipartisan, and job-protecting postal reform bill. We simply cannot afford to wait any longer.

Across Connecticut we have heard loud and clear from our constituents that preserving USPS should be a top priority of Congress. We whole-heartedly agree. Real jobs and livelihoods are at stake, as is the vitality and well-being of businesses and everyday Americans who rely heavily on a fully-functioning Postal Service. We are not facing a hypothetical situation for the future - time has already begun to run out. According to the Postal Service, the closure of the two area mail processing centers alone will impact over 430 workers in Connecticut. It will send much of the work currently done by these facilities out of the state to Massachusetts and New York, and slow the delivery of first class mail. Sadly, this is just a small fraction of the Postal Service's plan to downsize the postal workforce by more than 20 percent by closing post offices and potentially even moving to five-day delivery.

In total, these actions would impact almost every Connecticut resident, ranging from the 10,000 Connecticut postal workers whose jobs are directly threatened, to the seniors who may not receive their mail-order medications in time, to Connecticut communications companies that have a mutually dependent relationship with the Postal Service. Importantly, while USPS' plans may result in short-term savings, they will almost certainly amount to a long-term loss of revenue and the shedding of even more Connecticut jobs as consumers take their lucrative express packing services needs to USPS competitors such as UPS and FedEx.

The Postal Service's actions are motivated by the fact that it must reduce its operating costs by \$20 billion by 2015 in order to return to profitability. Yet, Congress has the sole authority to bring USPS to solvency in a way that won't increase our staggering unemployment rate or decrease services. We have long been at the forefront in advocating for Congress to take up a fair and effective bill to save and reform the USPS. The cornerstone of such legislation would be the reevaluation of the retiree health benefit prepayment requirement and the return of over \$80 billion in overpayments into Postal retiree pension funds. Yet, we are discouraged that legislation which attacks labor unions and consumer access has been prioritized over serious efforts that preserve the integrity and employment capacity of the Postal Service.

We have the power to solve the Postal Service's fiscal problems in a way that is fair, just, and smart. Again, we urge you to act immediately to schedule a vote on a bill that fixes USPS' retiree health benefits requirements and pension overpayments as well as saves much-needed services and jobs. Our state depends on it.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER
S. MURPHY
L. DELAURO

ROSA

Member of Congress
of Congress

Member

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