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Chairman Thurgood Marshall, Jr.
United States Postal Service Board of Governors
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW, Room 3436
Washington, DC 20260-3436

Dear Chairman Marshall,

Having exhausted all other options and with the future of the United States Postal Service (USPS) at risk, I write to ask the Board of Governors to proceed with immediate actions to replace Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe.

Over the past year the USPS initiated a restructuring proposal that would make major changes in many communities, including my own. Under the Postmaster General's leadership, the USPS displayed a complete lack of transparency and accountability throughout the process, which casts serious doubt that the current leadership is up to the task of leading the Postal Service through these challenging times.

In Western New York, where multiple postal facilities were designated for closure and over 700 jobs are on the line, we experienced the following:

- The Postal Service discouraged public engagement. Its idea of notice for a public meeting about a post office closure included posting a flyer in 8-point font in the post office and mailing notices to residents that never arrived, which would be comical if not so disrespectful. And at the public meeting the USPS kept no minutes or notes more detailed than a simple tally of the types of comments made.
- The Postal Service refused to cooperate with repeated and reasonable requests for information on how it arrived at its conclusions on which facilities to close. The information USPS provided to my office and to the public was confusing and often contradictory. The Postal Service proposed to close a sorting facility in Buffalo that it had awarded a gold medal for its practices that "create business growth opportunities for the Postal Service" just months before. They ignored requests to show that they took into account the facility's role as a major entry point of Canadian mail, the impact on local bulk-mail businesses that depend on access to the facility, community demographics, or how the closure could save on transportation costs – as it claimed – by driving local mail

from Buffalo to Rochester and back to Buffalo. Amazingly, to this date we have not received adequate responses to repeated requests to review a cost benefit or comparative analysis of the proposed closures in my community.

- The Postmaster General initially refused to meet or even take a phone call to discuss the proposed closures in my community. It was only after repeated requests that the Postmaster General agreed to discuss Postal Service decisions impacting Western New York. It is highly unlikely that a person who conducts himself with such arrogance and obvious contempt for the public would be capable of working with Congress to enact postal reform that will allow the Postal Service to prosper.
- A lack of integrity on the process led to a lack of integrity in the outcome. The USPS commissioned a report to determine the impact of significant nationwide closures and a degradation of current service standards on revenue. The report showed a significant loss of revenue, so the USPS commissioned a second report to produce the USPS' desired results and hide the fact that its own initial analysis showed a flawed business plan for consolidation.

In short, the events of the last year have been one instance after the other of indefensible, confusing, and opaque decisions made with little consultation with the public or its representatives. Indeed in dealing with the Postal Service the only thing that was consistent was its inconsistency, evidence that it had adopted a dismissive approach of "decide now, justify later."

The processing facility slated for closure in Buffalo was ultimately given a three year reprieve. The Postal Service and Congress must take this time to work together on a better process.

I understand that the role of U.S. mail is changing and I want to work with USPS to create growth opportunities for this long-respected institution. However, I do not think that is possible under its current leadership. And I will not tolerate allowing my community to go through such a disrespectful and arrogant process at the hands of USPS executives again.

I don't take this lightly, but due to a complete lack of transparency, a failed public process and unsubstantiated data I am left with no choice but to advocate for this necessary action to protect the USPS institution and the people and businesses it serves.

Sincerely,



BRIAN HIGGINS
Member of Congress