

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-1316

November 30, 2011

The Honorable Pat Donahoe
Postmaster General
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW
Washington, D.C. 20260-0010

Dear Postmaster Donahoe:

I write to express my frustration and concern over the lack of transparency in the Area Mail Processing (AMP) study intended to evaluate the Rockford Mail Processing and Distribution Center.

The United States Postal Service (USPS) is facing very troubling times and I understand that several hundred processing and distribution centers are under review for consolidation. However, the Rockford mail processing center is continually rated among the most efficient in the nation. It makes no sense to close Rockford and send roughly 200 jobs out of state into Madison, Wisconsin, especially when Rockford continues to struggle with higher than average unemployment rates. Furthermore, the people of northern Illinois deserve to continue having overnight mail service. It is critical to our business climate, and in these difficult economic times we cannot accept the massive delivery delays that would be caused by moving Rockford mail processing operations to Wisconsin.

I appreciated your meeting with Senators Durbin, Kirk, and me on November 1st and your willingness to visit the Rockford facility to address the postal employees. I know Senators Durbin and Kirk share my feeling that closing the Rockford facility without solid evidence of cost-savings would be incomplete and deficient. At that meeting, I specifically asked you for the AMP study and the data comprising it, including a comparison of equivalent information about Madison, before any conclusions or recommendations were made. I asked for this information because six years ago, the USPS tried to close the Rockford mail processing center but changed its mind based upon the superior data and scholarly material our local postal workers presented at a meeting in Rockford in June of 2005.

After the November 1st meeting, I tried repeatedly to obtain all of the information going into the AMP study so that my staff as well as all the affected stakeholders in Rockford may verify and better understand the logistics of the study. In a conversation that same week with Ms. Mary Ann Simpson of USPS, I asked her for this information so that I could work with the postal employees in Rockford and prepare corrected or additional

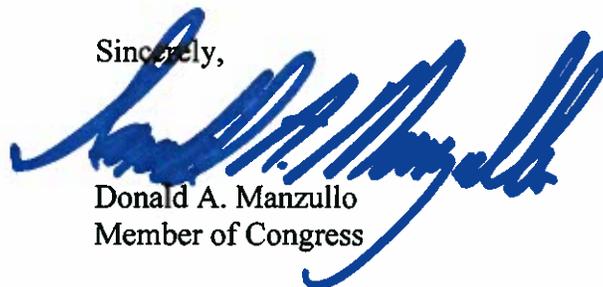
material, especially in light of what happened six years ago. Ms. Simpson insisted she could only give the information five days before a hearing. Plus, she also stated no body or group had come to a conclusion as to what facilities would be closed. Then, our office received, at 6:00PM on Tuesday, November 22nd – right before busiest travel day of the year – a notice of meeting in Rockford on December 8th to the effect that some people in Milwaukee had already made up their minds to close Rockford and move the operations to Madison. The main purpose of the meeting would be to explain their recommendation, not to solicit input.

I don't like being stonewalled and having the USPS refuse to share information. While I had a productive phone conversation with your deputy, Ron Stroman, earlier today, **this is still absolutely unacceptable**. It is impossible to effectively offer comment on a proposal without knowing the assumptions and information that underlie the proposal. Ensuring district involvement on this important matter stems from not only keeping these jobs in Rockford, but also stems from the fact that the Rockford processing center was under a similar review six years ago and we found that the **data in a previous USPS study was incorrect** and resulted in keeping the Rockford facility open.

I respectfully request two things: (1) deliver to my office immediately the study and supporting material regarding this consolidation proposal and (2) establish a new date for the hearing in Rockford. I would like the meeting to take place during the first or second week of January to give us an opportunity to analyze in a scholarly manner the AMP study so that you have all the relevant information you need to make an educated decision.

I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss my concerns with you in more detail either in-person or over the phone. Please contact my postal aide, Elaine Wilson, at (202) 225-5676 to arrange this. I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,



Donald A. Manzullo
Member of Congress

cc: Senator Richard Durbin
Senator Mark Kirk