

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 20, 2020

Louis DeJoy
Postmaster General
U.S. Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza West, S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Postmaster General DeJoy:

We are writing to urgently request information regarding operation of the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Old Redford Station, located in Detroit, Michigan. We heard disturbing reports about possible suspension of this Post Office as well as the uncertainty behind “month to month” operations. Under normal circumstances the services of the USPS are critical to communities, but during a global pandemic they become a lifeline. Many Americans have increased their reliance on mail delivery for critical medications, to conduct business, and to carry out their constitutional right to vote, and we must maintain these services.

The Old Redford Station is a highly utilized location, serving the 48,184 residents of the 48219 zip code, Michigan’s eleventh most populated zip code, and the 400 P.O. boxes that residents utilize for personal and business purposes. It also serves an overwhelmingly minority community, as 90% of residents are African American. This location is conveniently located on the Grand River bus line, making it easily accessible for senior citizens and other individuals who rely on public transportation. Should this Post Office close for service, the next available locations, Brightmoor Post Office and Seven Oaks Post Office, could be up to 4.6 miles away depending on where in the zip code the resident lives. Requiring residents who are currently served by the Old Redford Station to utilize the Brightmoor or Seven Oaks locations will disparately impact senior citizens, individuals without transportation, and those who rely on the convenient location of this government service.

The City of Detroit is a largely “unbanked community,” as many community members do not utilize banking services. The rate of unbanked community members is even higher for low-income residents. Unbanked community members often use the valuable and trusted money order services provided by post offices and use mailing options for bill payment. Local and easily accessible post offices that provide such services are critical for these communities. Suspension of local post office services could impede such residents from fulfilling their financial obligations.

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In addition to the adverse impact on services to this community, we are also concerned that USPS has not followed proper protocol when deciding to make an emergency suspension, including: properly notifying all impacted residents, holding a community meeting, and notifying labor organizations prior to the suspension. These steps are critical to ensuring that USPS is adequately serving all Americans and fulfilling obligations to their employees. We ask that you promptly provide my office with the following information about operations at the Old Redford station.

1. Does USPS have plans to hold a town hall meeting in a timely fashion in order to incorporate residents' opinions into its analysis of whether to suspend Old Redford Station? When will the community meeting take place?
2. Has USPS decided to conduct an initial feasibility study, in order to gain better insight as to what course of action should be taken in regard to this post office?
3. Will 48219 residents obtain adequate service from the Old Redford Station with the new month-to-month operation plan? Will any services be limited?
4. Please explain the basis for month-to-month operations at this location. Has the lease been extended on a month-to-month basis? Is USPS in discussions with building ownership related to a longer-term lease?
5. Has management now held discussions with management and labor organizations about the recently announced month-to-month operations, or a possible future suspension?

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator