

*Ask USPS to meet with local leaders before moving ahead with study to move mail processing to Sioux Falls*

Washington D.C.- Congressman Steve King (R-IA), Senator Chuck Grassley (R-IA) and Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) today sent to Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe a letter expressing their concerns that any new effort to consolidate Sioux City's mail processing operations into the Sioux Falls Processing and Distribution Center will bring about degradations in mail service that will adversely affect northwest Iowa. In light of these concerns, King, Grassley and Harkin are asking that the Postal Service's relevant district, area and headquarters personnel meet with Sioux City's community and business leaders and other stakeholders to address this and other issues before any further action is taken on the Area Mail Processing study.

Statement of Congressman King:

"We've been down this road with the Postal Service before," said King. "Ultimately there were a number of questions about the rationale for the proposed consolidation that the USPS couldn't answer. I have similar concerns now, but I look forward to again working with Sioux City's business and community leaders and our congressional delegation to ensure that the interests of Siouxland's residents and businesses are fully accounted for in this process."

Statement of Senator Grassley:

"The Postal Service has an obligation to conduct any review in a fair manner and listen and consider the views of the Sioux City community. We're committed to making sure the door is open for the community to weigh in and to holding the post office accountable for the way it

makes any decision impacting the processing center in Sioux City,” Grassley said.

Statement of Senator Harkin:

“I am very concerned by this proposal, and strongly urge USPS to exercise caution in proceeding with any consolidation of operations in western Iowa. Five years ago, USPS proposed a similar shift, which would have had significant negative consequences for the community. Reliable mail service is important for the Siouxland’s businesses and residents, and the potential impact on the community should be fully taken into account before any further steps are taken.”

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The text of the letter follows:

March 21, 2011

Mr. Patrick R. Donahoe

Postmaster General &

Chief Executive Officer

United States Postal Service

475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW Room 10022

Washington, DC 20260-0010

Dear Postmaster General Donahoe,

We have recently learned that the Postal Service is conducting an Area Mail Processing (AMP) study to examine possible consolidation of some operations from the Sioux City, IA, Processing and Distribution Facility into the Sioux Falls, SD, Processing and Distribution Center.

We understand that the Postal Service is facing significant challenges in light of the current economic downturn and regularly declining mail volumes. It is necessary and proper for the

Postal Service to continually assess its nationwide system of delivery and processing infrastructure to ensure it is well positioned to meet the demands of its customers. However, we have once before worked with the Postal Service and community and business leaders through a similar AMP examining the possible consolidation of some processing and distribution operations from Sioux City, IA, to Sioux Falls, SD. Having gone through this AMP process before only to learn that USPS would not, in fact, be consolidating operations in Sioux Falls, we are writing to ensure that the Postal Service has, in fact, taken into account all relevant criteria in choosing to move ahead with this new AMP study.

In 2007 when the Postal Service last studied the possible move of processing operations from Sioux City to Sioux Falls, we, along with Sioux City's community and business leaders, never received sufficient assurances from the Postal Service that customers in the Siouxland area would not experience downgrades in mail service with a move of processing operations from Sioux City to Sioux Falls. Additionally, the additional costs resulting from greater distances for mail to travel, the adverse impact that late-arriving mail from Sioux City might have on the processing of outgoing mail, and the effect that the loss of Sioux City's docks might have on transportation called into question the case for such a move, which the USPS ultimately declined to pursue.

Because these questions largely revolve around issues that will not change (distance between Sioux City and Sioux Falls and differences in the physical plant resources of each facility), we are concerned that any new effort to consolidate will ultimately bring about degradations in mail service that will adversely affect our constituents in northwest Iowa. Consequently, before any additional action is taken regarding the Sioux City AMP study, we ask that the Postal Service's relevant district, area, and headquarters personnel meet with business and community leaders and stakeholders from Sioux City to ensure that these concerns are fully understood and taken into account. These individuals will be visiting Washington, DC, and available to meet during the week of April 11th.

Thank you for your attention to this very important matter.

Sincerely,

*Congressman Steve King*

*Senator Chuck Grassley*

*Senator Tom Harkin*

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