

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 29, 2014

Patrick R. Donahoe

Postmaster General and Chief Executive Officer
United States Post Office
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington, D.C. 20260-3500

Postmaster General Patrick R. Donahoe:

On November 10, 2013, the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) and office supply retailer, Staples, announced a pilot program that would put postal retail units in more than 80 Staples stores across the country, including 30 Staples stores in California.

The USPS-Staples units would allow low wage, non-postal employees to provide mail retail services traditionally performed by Postal Service employees. Presumably, if the program is deemed a success by the USPS and Staples management, then it could be extended to Staples' 1,600 other store locations. While we recognize the USPS should explore innovative ways to increase revenues and cut costs, we believe the pilot program is a clear and unmistakable attempt at union-busting, as well as the privatization of critical public services.

Sadly, the USPS has closed thousands of post offices in communities across the country and has already slashed the postal workforce. Rather than maintain access to public postal services for the American people by dedicated, trained, and vetted postal employees sworn to uphold the integrity of the mail, the USPS-Staples pilot program would lead the way toward the privatization of basic mail services, thus threatening the job security of thousands of dedicated postal workers.

The USPS-Staples program is a dramatic step in the wrong direction, as it threatens the livelihoods of thousands of USPS employees and jeopardizes the promise of universal mail service to all communities – an obligation Staples, a private corporation, does not have.

As you know, the U.S. Postal Service is one of the only constitutionally-mandated government agencies, and it is required by law to provide universal service to each and every corner of the United States. For nearly 45 years, postal jobs have provided USPS employees with living wages and benefits, and it has brought hundreds of thousands of workers and families into the middle class. However, we believe that chipping away at our national communication infrastructure through this arrangement with Staples will put worker against worker and leave the most vulnerable communities behind, especially those in the inner city and rural areas.

The privatization of public postal services must be rejected. We oppose the USPS-Staples agreement and stand on the side of preserving the public Postal Service enshrined in the Constitution. Furthermore,

USPS management must allow the USPS to remain a robust, vibrant, and independent public good that meets the communication needs of all Americans.

We thank you for your consideration of our request, and we look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress



Member of Congress



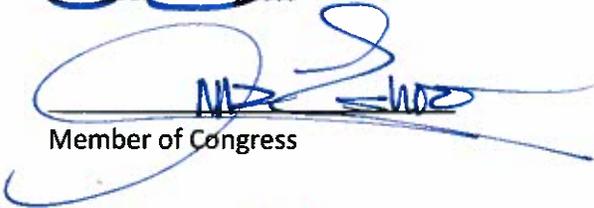
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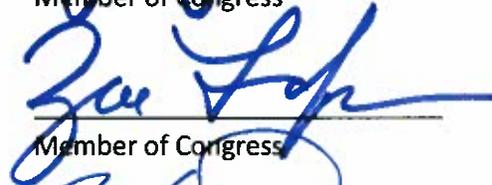
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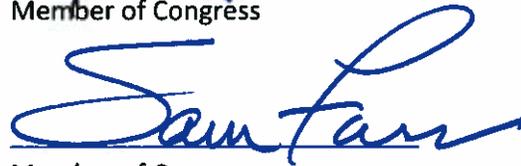
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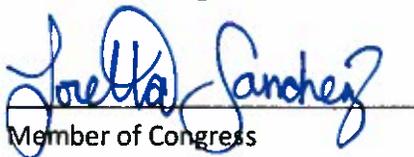
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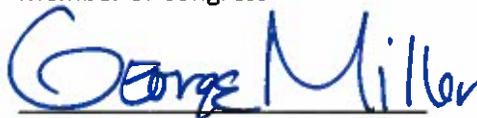
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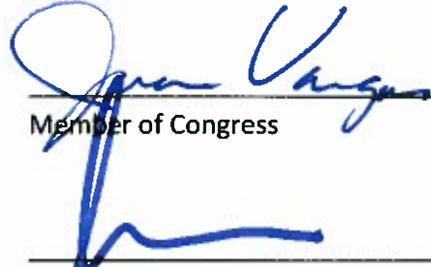
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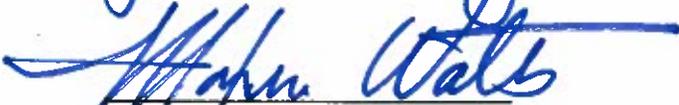
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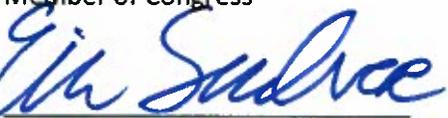
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