

Harkin Opposes Proposal that Would Allow USPS to More Easily Close Rural Post Offices

Written by Sen. Tom Harkin
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WASHINGTON, D.C. – May 3, 2011 - Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) today wrote to Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe in opposition to a proposed regulation that would give the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) the right to convert post offices into stations or branches of larger post offices at their discretion. Once converted, the USPS would then be able to close rural post offices without any consultation with local citizens or concern about the impact on a rural economy. As Harkin points out in the letter, it appears that the proposed regulations are designed specifically to circumvent current laws to ensure local voices are heard. Currently in Iowa, many post offices are facing potential closures that would disrupt service.

“Conveniently located post offices and a reliable postal delivery system are essential to keeping communities connected and businesses strong – particularly in rural areas of the country,” **said Harkin**. “Allowing the USPS to close post offices without listening to local concerns could interrupt reliable service to residents and hurt local businesses, all without consulting those it would most directly impact. While I strongly believe that we must push for a more cost effective and efficient postal system, this proposed regulation is simply misguided and I urge the Postmaster General to change his course on this issue.”

A copy of the letter can be found [here](#) .

Additionally, Harkin yesterday joined with Senator Chuck Grassley (R-IA) and Representative Steve King (R-IA) in writing to the USPS to ask that the Postal Service make public the details of the Area Mail Processing (AMP) Study that is being used by the Postal Service to weigh the move of Sioux City's mail processing operations to Sioux Falls. A copy of that letter can be found [here](#) .