

# Senate Republican Office

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## **Oregon Senators call on Congress to preserve rural post offices**

**Salem, OR** – A bi-partisan group of Oregon State Senators lead by rural Republicans are petitioning Congress to maintain vital postal links in Oregon. More than 41 post offices are under consideration for closure in Oregon, the majority located in rural areas. In Oregon, post offices are not only a place to get mail, but also serve as ballot boxes.

“Closing a post office in rural Oregon may look like an insignificant rounding error back in Washington DC, but to those who live in the area it is a vital life-line of communication and commerce for businesses, students and families,” said Senator Chris Telfer (R-Bend). “Closing the doors at these post offices further marginalizes rural Oregon, making it that much more difficult for them to make their voice heard or successfully run a business.”

Twenty-one Oregon State Senators signed a letter to congressional leaders considering more than \$2.1 billion in total cuts to the United States Postal Service. In part the letter said, “During these times of financial adversity, we understand the need to cut costs and reducing the budget. However, we feel closing our rural post offices is an inefficient solution to cost cutting. Closing post offices in rural areas won’t prevent mail delivery but will reduce the services provided to rural residents, such as mail registry and other special services which are essential for legal and bureaucratic communications with the Courts and state and federal agencies.” <<Letter attached>>

“The loss of a rural post office is about more than a longer, more expensive drive between rural communities to mail Christmas cards,” said Senator Ted Ferrioli (R-John Day). “These closures potentially shut off access to the ballot box in a state pioneering the ‘vote by mail’ experiment. Shutting a rural post office in Oregon is akin to denying access to constitutionally protected voting rights. Such closures will likely reduce voter turnout and harm the elections process. For this reason, no post office in rural Oregon should be included in the review for possible closure.”

The "Sense of the Senate" letter signed by more than twenty members of the Senate regardless of party affiliation outlines the importance of rural post offices and asks for continued funding. Post office closures are part of more comprehensive cost cutting measures proposed by Congress, including longer first-class mail delivery timelines. The federal agency needs to reduce operating costs by \$20 billion by 2015 in order to become profitable.

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