

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0403

November 28, 2023

Ms. Diane Inland
Arkansas-Oklahoma District Manager
United States Postal Service
4025 West Reno Avenue
Oklahoma City, OK 73125-7700

Dear Ms. Inland,

I am writing you today in response to the Mail Processing Facility Review being conducted by the United States Postal Service (USPS) with respect to the NW Arkansas P&DC in Fayetteville, Arkansas (NWA P&DC). As I represent the congressional district where the NWA P&DC is located, I am concerned that USPS did not directly notify my office by providing my staff with the Notice of Intent dated November 8, 2023, nor the Notice of Public Input Meeting dated November 21, 2023. I am quite disappointed to learn that the initial results of the facility review indicate a business case "...supports transferring some mail processing operations to the Oklahoma City PD&DC." I have several questions at this time that require a prompt response from USPS:

- Please explain how a reduction in mail processing services in Fayetteville, Arkansas, and transferring some of those operations to Oklahoma City will enhance mail operations in Northwest Arkansas?
- How is it possible that mail delivery impacts and delivery delays will not occur in the Northwest Arkansas area if some processing operations are to be relocated 221 miles away?
- What specific processing operations currently provided by the NWA P&DC does the USPS review's business case support moving to OKC?
- In February 2012, USPS announced that it was keeping the mail processing operation in Fayetteville and actually moved some operations to it. At that time, I acknowledged the wisdom of that decision as it doesn't make sense to move mail processing out of a major growth area in Arkansas.
 - What has changed since 2012, when it was understood that having a processing facility in Northwest Arkansas was appropriate and beneficial?
 - One thing that has changed is the continued growth in population served by the NWA P&DC.
 - The Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers MSA (Northwest Arkansas) included just over 440,000 people in 2010.
 - By the 2020 Census, that increased to 546,725 people.
 - In May 2023, the NWA Council reported that "The metropolitan statistical area, which consists of Benton, Madison and Washington counties in

Arkansas, saw its population increase to 576,403 people by July 1, 2022, the latest estimate made public by the U.S. Census Bureau shows. ...The new Census estimates show Northwest Arkansas moved up two spots between July 2021 and July 22 to reach No. 100 in population, passing Scranton, Pa., and Chattanooga, Tenn.”

What is the justification that USPS has for moving mail processing operations out of a P&DC that serves a growing region of our country?

- Will there be any reductions to staff levels as a result of this proposed change?
 - If there are anticipated job losses in Northwest Arkansas due to this proposed action, how many are expected?
 - If there are job losses, what actions will USPS take to assist impacted employees?
- When is a final decision about this proposed change expected to be made?
- If any proposed changes are made, when would those changes take effect?

These are just the initial questions I have about this proposed action. I look forward to receiving a full and complete response to these questions. My staff will be present at the Dec. 6, 2023, public input meeting at the Fayetteville Public Library.

Finally, let it be said that I appreciate the USPS need to modernize and become more efficient. It just doesn't make sense that it would involve reducing processing capabilities in one of the faster-growing areas of our country. I am concerned that such an action would only lead to mail delivery issues and delays for the constituents I represent and the customers served by USPS.

Sincerely,



Steve Womack
Member of Congress

SW/kw

Cc (by email): Jeremy Coffey, (A)Manager, Customer Relations
Helen Cuthbertson, Manager, Consumer Affairs