

To the members of the Petersburg Borough Assembly,

I am out of town and unable to speak in person, but I would like to go on record as *strongly opposing any request for home mail delivery*. This option has come up before and was soundly defeated. The PO is in many ways the heart of our community, a place where people see friends and neighbors on a daily basis and can chat. Even standing in line is a social gathering. **What is needed is MORE STAFF**. Please petition for that, not home delivery, which may sound good, but will create more problems than it is supposed to solve and will still require more staff, even more than needed for increased hours at the window. I hope the petition will go to our Congressional delegation as well as the Postal Service. I think their involvement, especially Lisa Murkowski's, is the only thing that has a chance of working.

If people are upset at the long lines, and we rightly are, imagine how upset we'd be if we couldn't get even our letters (and precious junk mail) for an extra day or two because of limited staffing. Think about it. Currently, once a day the Postal staff sends outgoing mail directly to Juneau for processing, even the in-town mail (not their choice). They receive incoming mail once a day, sort it, and put it into our boxes there in the building. After sorting the packages, they put those notices into our boxes, too. All of that would still have to occur, except instead of just sliding mail or package slips into a box on the wall of their mailroom, they would have to sort it into batches for delivery, as they do now - and then they'd have to deliver it! The mail doesn't carry itself from the PO to mailbox clusters, much less to our doors. The USPS pays well, whether the delivery is in-building or at-home. I'd rather see the sense of community engendered by people going to a central place to pick up their mail than an extra job or two to carry it around town, especially when we can't seem to get enough people to staff what we have now. Why do we think those extra people would magically appear? The system seemed to work fine when the Post Office was fully staffed. Petition for **more staff**, not a different service, when we don't even have personnel to support the service we're supposed to have now.

Another thing to consider in requesting home delivery is that we'd all have new addresses, with all the turmoil that causes. I've had the same box number ever since the 1960's. Keeping that would cost me money for box rent under "home" delivery, or I'd have to get a new address - my street address. Might cut down on junk mail for awhile, but it would also cut down on regular mail that I count on receiving. And I'd still have to go to the PO to pick up packages! That's still the cause of most of the line, and that wouldn't change. Without more staff, we'd just have an even longer wait time, because home delivery takes longer than just putting mail in a box there in the building, and somebody has to do it, in addition to (and after) the sorting they do now, cutting down even more on window service.

Speaking as a local resident, if the mail actually came to my door, it might be one thing. But it won't. True "home" delivery would require more Postal Service staff, even to mailbox clusters, and as far as I've heard in the past, actual to-the-door delivery has never been an option. Going out to a spot on the road and maybe meeting our next-door neighbors - in the rain, snow or whatever weather we're experiencing that day, doesn't cut it for me. (And imagine the road crews trying to plow around the boxes and then the mail carrier - and us - trying to get into them over/around the berm!) And even actual "home" delivery would have to be to a roadside mailbox (same or even worse deal in winter), unless a LOT more people were hired, because otherwise any mail carrier would have to do a whole lot of walking.

The lines at the Post Office are made up primarily of people picking up or mailing packages, which they'd have to go to the PO to do anyway. Admittedly, people waiting for things like buying stamps, picking up General Delivery, or mailing non-standard correspondence might have a shorter wait, but as far as I've experienced, most of the wait has been regarding packages. If we instead petitioned for the USPS to restore the in-the-lobby station for weighing your mail, getting your own postage and mailing things that way, that would help. People who are mailing things and want to avoid the line can (depending on their equipment and web savvy) print their own postage, walk up to the window, put the package down and walk on out. And staffing up to get back to full 9-5:30 service at the window would probably solve the problem altogether. But even now, annoying and time-consuming as it is, waiting in line turns into a social event; it's a chance to chat with friends and neighbors.

So I *strongly urge you* to instead petition - including our Congressional delegation - for more employees at our station. That's what is really needed. Rural delivery would require that anyway. I'd rather get a package slip as soon as a package comes in than wait a day for it to show up in my roadside mailbox and still have to go in and wait in line.

Thank you for your consideration.

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