



RURAL VOICES
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Canada Post Corporation Strategic Review

Rural Voices welcomes this opportunity to make a submission to the Canada Post Corporation Strategic Review (CPCSR).

Rural Voices is a national support network that provides a means for communities in rural, remote and northern Canada to benefit from knowledge, learning and best practices in early childhood education and care locally, provincially and nationally. Rural Voices fills a critical void in the flow of practical, professional and research information to rural, remote and northern communities across Canada, helping to ensure that our youngest citizens have the best start in life, and that their families have access to the responsive, flexible supports they need.

We are writing because we are very concerned about the future of universal, public postal service in this country.

As a rural network, we are anxious regarding changes being considered by the CPCSR. Rural Voices relies heavily on the mail service to communicate with rural, remote and northern communities across this country especially where technology is not readily available for communication. As a national resource we interact with many communities regarding future developments in their small communities as well as for the distribution of public education material for local families and/or community groups.

Many choose to live in their rural communities because they believe that a non urban community is the best place to live and raise a family. Many of our families have lived in our communities for generations. We believe that rural remote and northern communities should not have to do without services because of our geographic location. We have seen a steady decline in services to rural remote and northern communities in the past years. We have lost our banks, hospitals, doctors, schools and many of our post offices already. For you to further erode what we have is just another example of government saying rural residents do not matter. This is unacceptable.

From our investigation, overall, full-scale postal deregulation has not worked well. We are very concerned that deregulation would negatively affect our communities. Postal deregulation in other countries has largely led to fewer jobs and less service, both of which rural remote and northern communities need to maintain not lessen. We are aware of no valid reason to change the mechanism that funds universal postal service, an

exclusive privilege of all Canadians. We currently have one of the lowest standard postage rates in the industrial world. Our postal services are universal and affordable and we would like them to stay this way. Too often rural remote and northern communities get charged higher rates for everything from electrical services to child care. Postage costs are one of the few services, which are truly universal throughout Canada. To communicate within rural remote and northern communities across such a large country is not small feat. Often the only consistent and reliable means of communication is Canada Post.

Rural Voices would like to see an equitable range of services regarding health, education, employment opportunities and any other critical service needed by families and children in rural remote and northern Canada. The Rural Voices network is supported by rural, remote and northern citizens and organizations across Canada. Our goal is to give rural remote and northern citizens a voice in important national issues. We are concerned, from this perspective, that the government is not holding public hearings as part of its review of Canada Post. Any review of our public post office should include public hearings and should proportionally consider the feedback of rural remote and northern residents. We may be small in number, but we indeed *do* matter. The government should not make any decisions about our public post office until it has properly consulted with the public, including rural remote and northern citizens.

It is also critical that the government extend the deadline for submissions past the September deadline. It is very inconsiderate for a government to choose a deadline that crosses around one of the busiest times of year for many rural remote and northern communities. In many of our communities farmers and ranchers are haying and harvesting and in remote and northern communities many residents are in summer camps, fishing or may be away visiting family.

Thank you for considering our submission and originals are in the mail but sending this via email to meet the deadline.

Yours truly,

Jane Wilson
Co-manager Rural Voices

cc:
Roger Valley MP
Stephen Harper