

Opening Statement of Senator Jerry Moran
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
September 6, 2011

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for calling this hearing today and I thank the Postmaster General, as well as Mr. Foley and Mr. Herr for joining us to have an important discussion about the state of the United States Postal Service.

Mr. Chairman – as you well know, the Postal Service is facing a financial challenges. The Postal Service is being squeezed by increasing costs and decreasing revenues.

Postmaster General Donahoe – I am aware of the legislative proposals that the Postal Service has put forward, and the actions of the Postal Service and this Congress will affect hundreds of thousands of Postal Service employees, as well as millions of customers.

However, solutions to the Postal Service's financial dilemma should not be made at the expense of rural citizens. Over 130 small communities in my home state of Kansas are in threat of losing their local post office. These are communities that heavily rely on their post office, and reduced access in these small communities could bring great hardships to the residents who live there.

In many of these communities, the median age is higher than most urban and suburban communities. These citizens often rely on the timely delivery of medical supplies and prescription drugs. With reduced access, it could prove more difficult for these citizens to receive these supplies in a timely manner.

In the town of Damar, Kansas, local residents have poured time and money into improving their community. Over the past two decades, the town has spent millions of dollars on paved streets, sewer system, a new community building, as well as improvements to their school. Damar residents would view the loss of their post office building as such a blow to their community that the mayor, Brian Newell, has approached school organizations and businesses to encourage creating newsletters to send out to the community, just to increase mail volume for the local post office. This is just one example of the efforts that I hear Kansans are taking to save their community post office.

We have an opportunity before us to improve upon, and to create a more sustainable Postal Service. It is not the intent of this Congress to let the Postal Service fall into insolvency. I look forward to having a conversation with the Postmaster General, as well as directors from the Office of Personnel Management and GAO, on the proposals for the Postal Service while maintaining a critical service to rural residents.