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Hon. Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.
Vancouver Centre

May 5, 2014

Mr. Denis Lemelin
Canadian Union of Postal Workers
337 Bank Street
Ottawa, ON
K2P 1Y3

Dear Mr. Denis Lemelin,

Thank you for your recent correspondence concerning the future of Canada's mailing services. On December 11th of 2013, Canada Post announced it would bring an end to urban home mail delivery, raise the price of postage, and phase out between six and eight thousand Postal Workers' jobs over the next five years. The timing of the announcement may have been planned: just as they were preparing to celebrate the holidays with friends and family, and immediately after the House of Commons adjourned, Canadians learned that they will have to pay more in order to get fewer services from Canada Post.

I share your concern over this brash move to cut door-to-door deliveries, a decision that will affect at least 5 million Canadian households who still rely on this service. I also share your frustration over the lack of consultation on this issue—to make such a drastic cut to a Crown Corporation, while simultaneously increasing the cost of service, is a decision that should have at least involved more extensive debate, consultation and fact-based analysis from across the country. Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau publicly questioned the reasoning behind the timing of this sudden announcement, saying that it demonstrated a “tremendous level of cynicism” on the part of the Federal Government. Another concerned voice was that of Denis Lemelin, the National Director for the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, who stated at the time, “We recognize that Canada Post needs to change, but this is not the way!” Meanwhile, a top executive at Canada Post's statements that seniors would appreciate having to walk further to receive mail because it would afford them more exercise revealed much about the out-of-touch and insensitive thinking behind this decision.



In the Speech from the Throne, the Conservative government said it would address the needs of consumers and middle class families. Now, Mr. Harper's plan is to end household mail delivery in Canada's cities, suburbs, and towns, all while increasing the cost of stamps by at least 35%. The Conservative government maintains it had no prior knowledge of Canada Post's decision to end door-to-door mail delivery for five million Canadian households and increase the price of a stamp by 59%. Given the negative impact this move will have on seniors with limited mobility, on Canadians with disabilities, and the burden that the price increase will place on small businesses, it is hard to believe that the government did not have advanced knowledge of these changes. Indeed, this seems par for the course when it comes to Prime Minister Harper's approach to saving money, since it was the Harper Conservatives who presided over the closure of 42 rural post offices and cancelled service to 55,000 rural roadside mailboxes between 2006—2011, a move that was again made without any consultation involving the affected households.

Canadians are worried, and rightly so. This change in rates and services is being ushered in with a complete lack of communication and accountability, yet the Harper Conservatives claim ignorance. Liberals have submitted four separate Access to Information requests as well as an Order Paper question, which we trust will reveal exactly what the government knew and when. Meanwhile, we will continue to fight for open dialogue and ensure that the voices of so many concerned Canadians are heard on this issue.

Thank you for taking the time to write to me on this matter, and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,



Hon. Dr. Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.
Health Critic – Liberal Party of Canada
Vancouver Centre