

July 18, 2008

I am writing today to discuss the Canada Post Strategic Review. I want to discuss deregulation, this creates a "race to the bottom" when it comes to jobs and wages. This occurs when private companies bid on contracts for mail delivery, they cut costs by replacing unionized well-paying jobs with non-unionized jobs at much lower pay rates. This threatens the quality of mail delivery services across the country so the issue is, should Canada Post continue to have an "exclusive privilege" to handle addressed letters.

How will our post office provide universal post service if the government takes away the very mechanism that funds universal postal service – the "exclusive privilege" to deliver letters? What this means is that in exchange for the right to be the only organization that delivers the mail, Canada Post guarantees service to everyone in Canada, no matter where they live. By taking this "exclusive privilege" away it would erode Canada Post's revenue base and private companies would scoop up a lot of the business in urban areas, leaving the post office to serve more remote communities and could result to higher postage rates. We currently have one of the lowest standard postal rates in the industrial world. Over the next few months, our Conservative federal government will be conducting this Strategic Review that will determine the future of universal, public postal service in our country. This review will look at:

What postal services should people receive?

Who should provide them?

And should Canada Post continue to have an "exclusive privilege" to handle addressed letters, or should the letter market be open to competition?

91 per cent of the respondents to an Angus Reid poll said universal postal service at a uniform rate is one of the really great things about Canada Post. Canada Post was granted the "exclusive privilege" to deliver letters in 1981. Canada Post could face a downward spiral if our popular one-price-goes-anywhere disappears. The private sector competitors would focus on profitable areas and services, leaving unprofitable parts to our public post office. How would Canada Post provide a uniform and affordable service, especially in rural and remote parts of the country?

Now we ask this question, is the government really interested in hearing from the real owners and stakeholders of our post office -- the public. The advisory panel is asking for submissions by September 2, 2008 contacting "major stakeholders" but the government is not holding public hearings and is proceeding at a breakneck pace with its review. The few countries that have fully removed their post office's "exclusive privilege" have suffered. They now have fewer jobs, less service and higher postal rates for people and small businesses. How can Canada Post improve service if this "exclusive privilege" is eliminated?

I like my secure, trusted, affordable and universal postal service and think the federal government is trying to fix something that isn't broken. A speedy review without public hearing is hardly a democratic way to decide the fate of our publicly owned post office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kimberly Fenech". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Kimberly Fenech