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August 8, 2008

Canada Post Corporation
Strategic Review Advisory Panel
330 Sparks Street (HCCR)
Ottawa, Ontario
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To the Strategic Review Advisory Panel,

The Workers' Action Centre welcomes this opportunity to make a submission to the Canada Post Corporation Strategic Review (CPCSR).

WAC is a worker-based organization located in Toronto that works to improve the lives and working conditions of people in low-wage and unstable employment. We work with thousands of workers, predominantly recent immigrants, diverse ethno racial communities, women and workers in precarious jobs that face problems at work. Our Centre provides information about workplace issues, legislation and helps educate thousands of workers on how to address problems at work.

We are writing because we are very concerned about the future of universal, public postal service in this country. As users of the mail, we are concerned by the kind of changes being considered by the CPCSR, such as deregulation of our public post office. The Workers' Action Centre regularly relies on the mail to communicate to our membership and a wide array of community based and immigrant organizations across Ontario. The current reliability, affordability, efficiency and professionalism of our postal system is the backbone of our communication with many low-income workers who may not have access to computers and internet facilities. We use the postal system on a daily basis for newsletters, postcards and letters to ensure that many diverse communities of immigrants have access to information in a timely fashion.

We are very concerned that deregulation would negatively affect our members and our communities. We have seen in overall that full-scale postal deregulation has not worked well. Postal deregulation in other countries has largely led to fewer jobs, less service and higher postal rates for the public and small businesses. We currently have one of the lowest standard postage rates in the industrial world. It is critical that our postal services are universal and affordable especially for our members that are

predominantly low-income. Therefore the mechanism that funds our public postal service, the exclusive privilege, should not be eroded or eliminated.

Deregulation elsewhere has not proven to be a good thing for the public. People who use deregulated post offices tend to pay a higher postage rate than we do. The standard postage rate in Sweden has increased by 90% since its post office was deregulated in 1993 while the Canadian rate has increased by only 21% during the same period (1993 to 2005).

Members of the Workers' Action Centre are also members of the public with a real stake in our public post office. 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. The government should not make any decisions about our public post office until it has properly consulted with the public. The government should also extend the deadline for submissions.

Thank you for considering our submission

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Deena Ladd', written in a cursive style.

Deena Ladd
Executive Director
Workers' Action Centre