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Senator Chris Van Hollen
110 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Van Hollen,

I'm writing you as Mayor to request assistance in resolving an important issue concerning service by the US Post Office to the residents of the Town of Washington Grove. For context, our small municipality is contiguous with Gaithersburg and Montgomery County residential neighborhoods, none of whom seem to be subject to the following issue.

Our 225 single family residences do not receive mail delivery. The Washington Grove Post Office is located at the edge of town, and citizens must rely on renting PO Boxes there for mail delivery. In the past, General Delivery was also available, but this was discontinued some years ago.

Our residents pay a hefty price for no mail delivery. The rental fees charged by the USPS for boxes at the Washington Grove Post Office have escalated in the past decade by over 300% and continue to do so. For example, the annual fee for my own medium 'M' box (5.5" x 11") was \$110 in 2012 and is \$354 in 2021. I believe the current rate for the smallest box is now ~\$188 annually. For 225 addresses using small and medium boxes, this amounts to \$45,000 - \$60,000 a year for a service *that has no cost to most homeowners and businesses in the US.*

In fact, the USPS has a policy of offering free PO Boxes to areas not served by mail delivery and notes over 20 million such addresses across the country. It seems reasonable that the situation in Washington Grove would dictate that free PO Boxes should be available. **However, free PO Boxes that as apparently offered elsewhere are not available, and it has been impossible to engage with the USPS as to why not.**

I'm requesting your assistance in resolving this seemingly and contrary and unfair situation. I hope you will engage the USPS and have them explain their policy that burdens the citizens of Washington Grove, but not neighboring areas.

I may be contacted as necessary for further discussion at 240-432-5700. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

John G. Compton
Mayor, Washington Grove MD