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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
NATIONAL SECURITY, INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT AND MONETARY POLICY
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HIGHWAYS AND TRANSIT
SUBCOMMITTEE ON RAILROADS, PIPELINES,
AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

April 27, 2021

Wanda Prater
Chicago Postmaster
United States Postal Service

Randy Stines
Chicago District Manager
United States Postal Service

Dear Ms. Prater and and Mr. Stines,

I write to follow up on a previous inquiry sent by my office on February 10, 2020, concerning an incident at the Pilsen post office located at 1859 S. Ashland Ave. Although we appreciated USPS' response on March 4, 2020, my office continues to receive complaints from constituents alleging they were denied service or faced hostility at the post office because they could not speak English. These complaints are not limited to the Pilsen location; community leaders and local elected officials have also raised concerns about post offices in Jefferson Park, Gage Park, Logan Square, Little Village, and Avondale.

USPS' above-mentioned response listed the "tools and aides" available to postal customers who need assistance in a language other than English. At a recent briefing, my staff were informed that technological translation aides would be beta tested in our district. However, some of the tools described in USPS' response letter require a smartphone or wireless internet connection, which creates undue barriers to access. Furthermore, no technological aide can replace direct, personal engagement with customers. I am also concerned that using managers or non-clerk postal workers for language assistance can be disruptive to normal post office operations.

To that end, I worked with the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) to explore solutions that provide in-person help for constituents while adhering to established union contracts. Together, we strongly recommend hiring clerks who speak Spanish, Mandarin, and Polish on an ad hoc basis. These clerks could then be assigned to post offices where service in those languages is needed. Over 50% of all constituents in my district speak a language other than English at home, and multilingual service at their neighborhood post offices will help ensure a positive experience for all.

Thank you for your timely consideration of our proposal and we look forward to your response. Please contact my Constituency Services Liaison, David Garcia, at David.Garcia@mail.house.gov with any questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,



Jesús G. “Chuy” García
Member of Congress

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