

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1534

To limit the closing and consolidation of certain post offices in rural communities, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 31 (legislative day, JULY 21), 2003

Mr. REID introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Governmental Affairs

A BILL

To limit the closing and consolidation of certain post offices in rural communities, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Rural Post Office and
5 Community Preservation Act of 2003”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

8 (1) a 1993 study by the National Trust for
9 Historic Preservation found that approximately 80

1 percent of people in small communities plan their
2 trips around a visit to a post office;

3 (2) the Postal Service is increasingly closing
4 small, rural post offices in the center of town and
5 replacing such services with more distant post offices
6 on the outskirts of such communities; and

7 (3) closing post offices in the centers of small,
8 rural communities removes the hub of such commu-
9 nities and has a deleterious effect on the economies
10 and quality of life in such communities.

11 (b) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this Act to limit
12 the closure of centrally located rural post offices, and to
13 enhance the economic health and quality of life of rural
14 communities.

15 **SEC. 3. MAINTAINING CENTRALLY LOCATED RURAL POST**
16 **OFFICES.**

17 Section 404(b) of title 39, United States Code, is
18 amended by adding at the end the following:

19 “(3)(A) In this paragraph, the term ‘rural com-
20 munity’ means a city, town, or unincorporated area
21 with a population of not more than 20,000 people.

22 “(B) The Postal Service may not make a deter-
23 mination to close or consolidate a post office in a
24 rural community, unless the Postal Service makes a
25 determination that such closing or consolidation will

1 have a positive economic impact on that community
2 and enhance the quality of life in that community.

3 “(C) In making a determination under subpara-
4 graph (B), the Postal Service shall presume that the
5 relocation of a centrally located post office in a rural
6 community to the boundaries of that community will
7 have a negative economic impact on that community
8 and will not enhance the quality of life in that com-
9 munity.

10 “(D) If the Postal Service makes a determina-
11 tion to close or consolidate a post office in a rural
12 community, the Postal Service shall develop a plan,
13 in consultation with people in the rural community,
14 to provide for the rehabilitation and use of the post
15 office for purposes favored by the people of that
16 community. Such plan shall be developed before the
17 closing or consolidation takes effect.”.

18 **SEC. 4. GRANTS FOR REHABILITATION OF POST OFFICES**

19 **IN RURAL COMMUNITIES.**

20 (a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ‘rural
21 community’ means a city, town, or unincorporated area
22 with a population of not more than 20,000 people.

23 (b) GRANTS.—The Postal Service may award grants
24 to State and local governments, private organizations, or

1 individuals to provide for the rehabilitation of any closed
2 post office in a rural community.

3 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
4 are authorized to be appropriated \$10,000,000 for each
5 of fiscal years 2003 through 2007 to carry out this sec-
6 tion.

7 **SEC. 5. TRANSFER OF CLOSED POST OFFICE IN ELY, NE-**
8 **VADA.**

9 The Postal Service shall transfer the real property
10 (including all buildings and improvements) located at 415
11 5th Street in Ely, Nevada, and occupied by the closed post
12 office, to the local county government of Ely County, Ne-
13 vada.

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