

USPS HOLDS OFF CLOSURES



Earlier in this month we talked about the potential cutbacks that the U.S. Postal Service wants, and was expected to make, in the near future. For those of you who missed the [original coverage](#) here is a summary excerpt. "The U.S. postal service is getting ready to do something completely unprecedented in its history. They are getting ready to layoff members of their staff. In what is an expected move for an organization that is just now able to layoff workers for the first time in its history, the numbers are not small. If all goes according to the current plan about 30,000 postal workers are expected to be out of a job at some point in 2012." Well it looks like that is not happening any time in the near future. On Tuesday the U.S. Postal Service has agreed to at the very least delay the closure of some 252 mail processing centers and 3,700 local post offices in rural areas. Not that these centers are getting much of a delay. The closures have only been held off until the middle of May 2012. Today the post office released a statement saying they were willing to hold off on putting people out of jobs in order to give the members of congress extra time to pass a law that would give the post office more control over their finances. Some of the specifics that the Post Office is looking for include more authority over their money, and the ability to be more liquid. The Post Office is sitting on some serious debt, which is expected to default on Friday to a \$5.5 billion payment that they owe to the U.S. Treasury. On the whole the service is expected to lose about \$14.1 billion next year, which would be a record loss. David Parteneimer, a spokes person for the U.S. Postal Service, told the following to a reporter [for the Associated Press](#), "There continues to be extreme urgency, and our financial crisis continues, but we're hoping by working with senators and all members of Congress that they can pass comprehensive legislation that allows the Postal Service to return to profitability." Several members of congress have taken a direct interest in the situation. 21 senators, who are primarily from states heavy with rural areas where closures could be problematic, signed a letter to the leaders of congress, urging them to slow the closings by at least six months when the law is passed. Bernie Sanders of Vermont led the letter. He told the following to the same reporter for the Associated Press, "What I feared very much is that the post office unilaterally would start making drastic cuts to processing plants, rural post offices and slow first-class mail service before Congress can pass postal reform. So it's a step forward in terms of giving us time with certainty that rural post offices won't be closed." Only time will tell if the delay will have the intended effect, and what will happen to the workers who are employed by the post office and the potential jobs lost. At the current moment some people are estimating that the Post Office could layoff up to 100,000.

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