

# UPDATE

NAPS Leg/Reg Update - November 25, 2014

## **NAPS Urges PRC to Open Inquiry into Plant Consolidations and Expected Mail Slowdown**

The National Association of Postal Supervisors has requested the Postal Regulatory Commission to assess the impact of the Postal Service's planned consolidation of 82 mail processing facilities, slated to begin in January 2015. The consolidations are expected to slow down delivery of much of the nation's mail, especially in rural and small town America, and virtually eliminate overnight single-piece First Class mail service.

In a [November 25, 2014 letter](#) to Postal Regulatory Commission Chairman Ruth Y. Goldway, NAPS President Louis M. Atkins urged the Commission to undertake a rigorous assessment of the processing facility consolidations because the underlying mail slowdown "could have significant consequences upon the nation's commerce, future mail volume and respect for the Postal Service brand." Atkins pointed to recent studies by the [Government Accountability Office](#) and the [Office of Inspector General of the Postal Service](#) that have underscored the significance of the consolidations and their negative impact on the nation's mail system. Fifty-one members of the Senate and over 160 members of the House of Representatives also have called for a postponement of the consolidations.

The Postal Regulatory Commission in 2012 undertook a preliminary assessment of the Postal Service's initial plans to realign its mail processing and transportation network, finding that cost savings

were unlikely to be as high as those projected by the Postal Service. The Commission in an [advisory opinion](#) to the Postal Service also recommended a series of actions that the Postal Service should undertake before proceeding with the consolidations, including alternatives that would preserve service levels.

The Postal Service largely ignored the PRC's recommendations and proceeded to consolidate 141 processing facilities during 2012 and 2013. The Postal Service is now proceeding to implement Phase II of its so-called Mail Processing Network Rationalization Plan, involving the further consolidation of 82 mail processing facilities in 37 states, along with the reduction of mail service standards. The Office of Inspector General of the Postal Service in October [challenged](#) the Phase II consolidation actions as incomplete because of the Postal Service's failure to disclose the impact of these consolidations on customer service in each affected delivery area, as required by the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act.

"It is imperative that more analysis be undertaken, both by the Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission, in order to ensure the most efficient approach toward assuring the viability of America's mail system," NAPS President Atkins said, in requesting the Commission to reopen its earlier inquiry or initiate a new proceeding to assess the full impact of the Postal Service's actions.

A NAPS Issue Brief on the consolidations is [here](#).

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