

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 9685

To amend title 39, United States Code, to establish procedures for post offices that suspend operations due to an emergency, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 19, 2024

Mr. BOST (for himself, Mr. RESCHENTHALER, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. LAMALFA, and Mrs. HARSHBARGER) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability

A BILL

To amend title 39, United States Code, to establish procedures for post offices that suspend operations due to an emergency, 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 “Upending Secret Post-
5 al Shutdowns Act” or the “USPS Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. POST OFFICE EMERGENCY CLOSURE PROCEDURES.**

7 Section 404 of title 39, United States Code, is
8 amended by adding at the end the following:

1 “(f)(1) If any post office temporarily suspends oper-
2 ations due to an emergency—

3 “(A) on the first day of such suspension, the
4 Postal Service shall place a sign or other physical
5 notice of the suspension at the post office and pub-
6 lish a notice of the suspension on the Postal Service
7 public website; and

8 “(B) not later than 5 days after the first date
9 of such suspension, the Postal Service shall notify
10 relevant public officials.

11 “(2) For purposes of paragraph (1)(B)—

12 “(A) the notice required under such paragraph
13 shall include the reasons for the suspension, the in-
14 terim solution for mail delivery, and expected end
15 date of the suspension; and

16 “(B) the term ‘relevant public officials’ means,
17 with respect to a post office—

18 “(i) each Member of the House of Rep-
19 resentatives (including a Delegate or Resident
20 Commissioner to Congress) representing a con-
21 gressional district which includes all or part of
22 the geographic area served by such post office;

23 “(ii) each Senator representing a State
24 which includes all or part of the geographic
25 area served by such post office; and

1 “(iii) the head of each unit of local govern-
2 ment with jurisdiction over all or part of the ge-
3 ographic area served by such post office.

4 “(3)(A) If a suspension of operations due to an emer-
5 gency lasts for 30 days, the Postal Service shall open a
6 30-day public review period under which individuals served
7 by the post office and or relevant public officials may pro-
8 vide comments to the Postal Service.

9 “(B) If a suspension of operations due to an emer-
10 gency lasts for 60 days—

11 “(i) the Postal Regulatory Commission shall
12 conduct a review of the suspension; and

13 “(ii) the Postal Service shall begin the process
14 to relocate the operations of the suspended post of-
15 fice, consistent with the procedures for post office
16 relocation under this title.

17 “(C) In carrying out any relocation under subpara-
18 graph (A)(ii), the Postal Service shall—

19 “(i) solicit input from the head of each unit
20 local government with jurisdiction over all or part of
21 the geographic area served by such post office; and

22 “(ii) open a 30-day public comment review pe-
23 riod for a new proposed location.

24 “(4) In consultation with the Postmaster General, the
25 postmaster for each post office shall promulgate and es-

1 tablish an action plan in the case of an emergency suspen-
2 sion of post office operations.

3 “(5) Not later than January 1 of each calendar year
4 beginning with calendar year 2025 the Postal Service shall
5 submit a report to Congress on emergency suspensions of
6 operations of post offices during the most recently ended
7 calendar year. Such report shall include, for each instance
8 of an emergency suspension of operations of a post office,
9 the location of the post office, the duration of the emer-
10 gency suspension, and the reason for the emergency sus-
11 pension.

12 “(6) In this subsection, the term ‘emergency’ means
13 a natural disaster, termination of a lease or rental agree-
14 ment, lack of qualified personnel to operate the office, ir-
15 reparable damage when no suitable alternate quarters are
16 available in the community, severe damage to, or destruc-
17 tion of a post office, health and safety concerns, mold,
18 challenges to the sanctity of the mail, or the lack of ade-
19 quate measures to safeguard the post office or its rev-
20 enue.”.

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