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Contact: Jessica McCreight  
[jmccreight@SKDKnick.com](mailto:jmccreight@SKDKnick.com); 202-464-6900

## **Affordable Mail Alliance Applauds Senator Collins' Ongoing Battle Against Postal Service Rate Hikes**

### ***Senator Submits Strong Official Statement Opposing Price Increases with Postal Rate Commission***

Washington, DC – The Affordable Mail Alliance – a growing coalition of nearly 1,000 non-profits, Fortune 500 companies, small businesses, major trade associations, consumer groups and citizens representing most of the mail sent in the United States – today welcomed Senator Susan Collins' (R-ME) submission of formal comments to the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC). The comments urge the PRC to dismiss the United States Postal Service's plan to increase rates by ten times the rate of inflation.

Senator Collins is the ranking Republican on the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, and a key author of the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006 (PAEA). Her official comments reject the Postal Service's claim that its circumstances are "extraordinary or exceptional" enough to allow raising prices faster than inflation under the 2006 law.

"As the Author of the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006, which grants the Postal Service the limited authority to file an exigent rate case, I want to make the congressional intent regarding the provision completely unambiguous as the language nor the legislative history of the PAEA authorizes the United States Postal Service to file an exigent rate case under the current circumstances," Collins wrote in her official comments to the PRC.

The Senator continues: "The Postal Service's current financial condition is largely the result of its own failure to sufficiently update its business model to adapt to predictable and natural cyclical changes in the economy and mail usage. The Postal Service's financial condition is not the result of 'extraordinary or exceptional circumstances' required by law to initiate an exigent rate case."

Collins has led the Capitol Hill opposition against the proposed rate increases since the Postal Service announced them on July 6, and has already expressed her support for the Affordable Mail Alliance's motion to dismiss the plan, which was filed with the Postal Regulatory Commission on July 19.

"As pressure builds on the Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission, we are extremely grateful to Senator Collins for leading the opposition to the misguided proposal to increase Postal Service rates," said Tony Conway, Affordable Mail Alliance spokesperson and Executive Director of the Alliance of Nonprofit Mailers. "As a leading author of the 2006 law, she understands better than anyone else why the Postal Service's increase would cause severe hardship to businesses and customers across the nation, and threaten jobs and our nation's fragile economic recovery."

The Postal Service claims that a rate increase is essential to maintaining its solvency. However, USPS has done little to improve its business model, and an increase ten times the rate of inflation will further drive away customers, worsening its financial situation. USPS has had years to get its house in order and should have seen its financial problems coming years ago; this is not an overnight crisis. The Postal Service needs to do what most American businesses have been forced to do in the past few years: make better and tougher decisions, offer services customers need, address workforce problems, and cut back on needlessly high spending. Until the Postal Service does those things, talking about a rate increase is premature.

### **More on the Affordable Mail Alliance**

The Affordable Mail Alliance is an unprecedented coalition of postal customers who have come together to say "enough is enough" – no more postal rate hikes. Our coalition includes charities, consumer groups, small businesses, national retailers, utilities, banks, insurance companies, Fortune 500 companies and the customers who use the Post Office every day. Our members represent many of the Postal Service's biggest customers—and many of its smallest—and use every major class of mail. It's this cross-section of America that will suffer if USPS raises rates. For further information, please visit [www.affordablemailalliance.org](http://www.affordablemailalliance.org) or contact Jessica McCreight; [jmccreight@SKDKnick.com](mailto:jmccreight@SKDKnick.com); 202-464-6900.

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