



THE SENATE  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY

THOMAS DUANE  
SENATOR, 29TH DISTRICT

ASSISTANT MINORITY LEADER  
FOR POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION

COMMITTEES:  
CODES  
CIVIL SERVICE & PENSIONS  
FINANCE  
HEALTH  
JUDICIARY  
RULES

PLEASE RESPOND TO:  
❑ 322 EIGHTH AVENUE, SUITE 1700  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10001  
PHONE: (212) 633-8052  
FAX: (212) 633-8096

❑ ROOM 808  
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING  
ALBANY, NY 12247  
PHONE: (518) 455-2451  
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❑ EMAIL  
DUANE@SENATE.STATE.NY.US

August 30, 2007

John E. Potter  
Postmaster General  
United States Postal Service  
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW  
Washington, DC 20260-00107

Dear Mr. Potter:

It has come to our attention that the James A. Farley Post Office located at 421 Eighth Avenue in Manhattan – New York City's only post office that is open to the public 24 hours and 7 days a week – does not provide full weekend access for wheelchair-bound or otherwise mobility-impaired individuals. As the elected officials who represent the Farley Post Office, joined by one of New York State's newest legislators, who has a physical disability, we are concerned about this lack of equal access for disabled customers.


Currently, customers who cannot climb the stairs at the main and side entrances must access the Farley Post Office through its Ninth Avenue annex, which has the building's only ramp-accessible entrance. However, because this entrance has been closed during weekend hours, apparently due to a shortage of available staff, those customers have been forced to forgo service, or, alternatively, rely upon United States Postal Service (USPS) employees to act as couriers - completing transactions for them while they wait outside at the base of the stairs, regardless of weather conditions.

We appreciate that, in response to a *New York Post* story on this inequity, the USPS has announced that it will keep the Ninth Avenue annex open from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. on weekends, but this partial concession is still unacceptable. We believe that an accessible entrance needs to remain open during all operating hours, and question whether the current system of having staff come to the sidewalk to assist disabled customers when the ramp-accessible entrance is closed is a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Regardless, it effectively segregates and demeans customers with disabilities, and is a particularly unacceptable arrangement for a government agency that serves the public.

If 24-hour weekend supervision of the Ninth Avenue annex is not feasible, we strongly urge the USPS to construct an accessible ramp or a proper alternative on the continuously staffed Eighth Avenue entrances. An accessible entrance on Eighth Avenue would be preferable, as it would eliminate the need for disabled customers to travel to Ninth Avenue in order to use the service windows on the Eighth Avenue side.

We appreciate your taking our concerns into consideration and look forward to working with you on remedying this situation expeditiously. If you have any questions or require further information, please feel free to call any of our offices.

Very truly yours,



Thomas K. Duane  
State Senator  
29<sup>th</sup> District



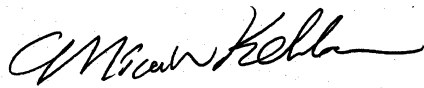
Jerrold Nadler  
Member of Congress  
8<sup>th</sup> District



Christine C. Quinn  
City Council  
Speaker



Richard N. Gottfried  
Assemblymember  
75<sup>th</sup> District



Micah Z. Kellner  
Assembly Member  
65<sup>th</sup> District

cc:

United States Postal Service, Peter Fontana, Director of Customer Relations  
Moynihan Station Development Corporation, Robin Stout, President  
United States Department of Justice Americans with Disabilities Act Division  
Disabled Riders' Coalition, Michael Harris, Executive Director  
Disabilities Network of NYC, Alexander Wood, Executive Director  
Norma Hart