

Overlook Neighborhood Association

Alexandra Degher, Chair

chair@overlookneighborhood.org



March 4, 2020

To: Sen. Ron Wyden, Sen. Jeff Merkley and Rep. Earl Blumenauer
Re: U.S. Postal Service, Consolidated Casing Pilot Project in the 97217 ZIP code

Dear Sen. Wyden, Sen. Merkley and Rep. Blumenauer,

In September 2019, the U.S. Postal Service began a pilot program in the 97217 ZIP code. The “consolidated casing” program tests changes to how mail is sorted and delivered in the neighborhood. The Postal Service launched the program with neither transparency nor community engagement. The Overlook Neighborhood Association therefore asks that you intervene with the Postal Service to ensure that the effects of this pilot program on residents and businesses – both good and bad – be a key metric in evaluating its success.

The Postal Service has rolled out the consolidated casing pilot program in communities across the nation. The 97217 ZIP, which includes thousands of residences and businesses in the Overlook Neighborhood and North Portland, is the only one in Oregon included in the pilot.

Since the program’s launch, the Postal Service has taken no steps to educate the public about the pilot program. Ideally, the Postal Service would have reached out to the neighborhood prior to initiating the pilot program. The people subjected to service tests deserved an opportunity to know what was happening before some of them started to have issues with mail delivery.

The opportunity for community engagement has not passed, though. We hope that you will contact the Postal Service and share an expectation that it survey residents and businesses in pilot program areas, including the 97217 ZIP, to assess how the program affected delivery from the customer standpoint. Clearly such information is crucial to determining if consolidated casing is appropriate for national implementation. This cannot simply be a test of cost savings and labor efficiency, but also must be an assessment of customer service.

Thank you for your service in Washington and for representing the Overlook Neighborhood.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alexandra Degher".

Alexandra Degher
Overlook Neighborhood Association, Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christian J. Trejbal".

Christian Trejbal
Overlook Neighborhood Association, Vice Chair