

FRANCISCO V. AGUILAR

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STATE OF NEVADA



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Deputy Secretary for Elections

February 28, 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in my capacity as Nevada's Secretary of State, in response to a potential move of United States Postal Service (USPS) processing operations from the Reno Processing & Distribution Center (PD&C) to the Sacramento PD&C. I oppose this move for both operational and logistical reasons, related to the importance of the mail currently processed in Reno. I hope that USPS will reconsider this change, and instead invest further into existing Northern Nevada operations.

As Chief Officer of Elections for Nevada, I cannot overstate the impact that this move would have on our state's electoral process. Nevada is a universal vote by mail state, where by law a mail ballot must be sent to every active registered voter, with few exceptions. . Nevadans can drop their ballot in the mail any day, until and on election day, and as long as their ballot is **postmarked on or before election day and received no later than the fourth day after the election (NRS 293.269921)**, their ballot will be counted. Based on communication with the USPS, it is my understanding that if this change moves forward it may not be possible for ballots placed in the mail on election day, in central and northern Nevada, to be postmarked the same day. This has the potential to disenfranchise thousands of Nevada voters and would unquestionably impact the results of Nevada's elections.

My office also oversees business licensing in the state. Business owners mail us documents to keep up their annual filings and other required documents to run their business, which we then process. The volume of business-related mail we receive is large, and any added delay between when letters are sent and when we process them represents a barrier to the conduct of business in Nevada.

In addition to these operational concerns, the logistical obstacles are also significant. There is one major route between Sacramento and Reno, Interstate 80. As I write this letter, the National Weather Service has advised of a storm that could drop upwards of eight feet of snow on Donner Summit, which I-80 passes through. It is not irregular for I-80 to be closed due to weather, or weather-related accidents during both winter and summer months. If processing of mail ballots is moved to Sacramento, and the pass is closed for any reason in late October or early November, the processing time could be delayed unexpectedly, potentially disenfranchising additional Nevada voters.

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There is also the matter of Nevada's mail ballots being taken to California for processing, before being returned to Nevada and their voters. Removing those ballots from the state and removing them from their original legal jurisdiction presents a number of issues, including but not limited to the exclusive jurisdiction of Nevada courts, Nevada investigators, and a hurdle for information gathering into any irregularities in the mail voting process. Elections are a matter of complete state responsibility and your proposed action would remove the opportunity for us to manage our elections.

For these reasons, as well as the other reasons laid out by stakeholders such as Washoe County, we hope you will not move forward with this proposed change.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "FV Aguilar". The letters are cursive and somewhat stylized.

Francisco V. Aguilar
Nevada Secretary of State