

May 2, 2013
Contact: Nils Moe 510-981-7100

Office of the Mayor
Immediate Release
Press Advisory

Berkeley Mayor Bates, Senator Hancock and Assemblymember Skinner Call for Halt of Sales of Historic Post Offices across Country

Press conference planned for 10:00 a.m. on Friday to call for moratorium on all sales of historic post offices across the country

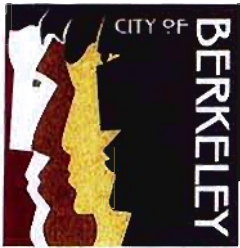
Berkeley, CA – Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates, Senator Loni Hancock, Assemblymember Nancy Skinner and Members of the Berkeley City Council will hold a press conference at Berkeley's Main Post Office on Friday, May 3rd at 10am to sign a joint letter appealing the sale of Berkeley's historic post office as well as call for a moratorium on the sale of all historic post offices across the country.

A number of initiatives are currently underway to try and save the Postal Service. One example is U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders' (I-Vt) Postal Service Protection Act of 2013. Senate Bill 316 makes common sense recommendations to assist the Postal Service, including a crucial change in how the service is required to fund future benefits.

At the press conference, city and state leaders will sign onto and mail a letter formally appealing the U.S. Postal Service's intent to sell Berkeley's historic downtown post office. Leaders will also call for a moratorium on the sale of all historic post offices in light of initiatives underway like Senate Bill 316.

- What:** Berkeley Mayor Bates, Senator Hancock and Assemblymember Skinner Call for Halt of Sales of Historic Post Offices across Country. An appeal letter will be postmarked and mailed immediately following the press conference.
- Where:** Berkeley Main Post Office
2000 Alston Way (at Milvia Street), Berkeley, CA
- When:** Friday, May 3rd at 10:00 a.m.
- On Site Contact:** Nils Moe 510-910-6594 (cell)

For more information contact: Nils Moe 510-981-7105 (O), 510-910-6594 (C)



Office of the Mayor

Tom Bates
Mayor

April 30, 2013

Vice President of Facilities
Facilities Implementation – Pacific Area
1300 Evans Avenue, Suite 200
San Francisco, CA 94188-0200

Re: Formal appeal of decision to sell the Berkeley Main Post Office located at 2000 Allston Way, Berkeley, CA 94704 and the relocation of retail services.

Dear Sir or Madam,

Please accept this letter as formal appeal of the United States Postal Service's (USPS) decision to sell the Berkeley Main Post Office located at 2000 Allston Way, Berkeley and the relocation of retail services currently available at the site.

The Berkeley City Council strongly opposes and objects to the sale of the Downtown Berkeley Post Office. We are disappointed to learn that USPS has decided to move forward with the sale of this historic building despite the overwhelming public opposition to the sale, as evidenced by the hundreds of community members that testified in person and via written correspondence.

On March 5, 2013 the Berkeley City Council adopted a resolution opposing the sale of the Berkeley Main Post Office. In it, the City Council requested USPS to suspend efforts to sell the building for one year, so that the City of Berkeley and USPS could work together to find a solution with the goal of continuing USPS ownership of the building. Since that time, USPS has not reached out to find an alternate solution that would not put the historic building up for sale. Instead, USPS unilaterally announced the sale and the relocation of retail services without taking into consideration the requests made by the Berkeley City Council.

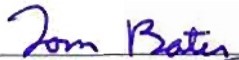
The Berkeley Main Post Office is on the National Historic Register of Places. It is the anchor of the Berkeley Civic Center Historic District, which is comprised of Berkeley's landmarked Old City Hall, Farm Credit Building, Veterans' Memorial Building, Berkeley Central Public Library, Berkeley High School, Community and Little Theater, YMCA, Armstrong College, the Elks Club and Civic Center Park. To privatize the Berkeley Main Post Office is an attack on the historic fabric of our City's center and the Berkeley City Council continues to be united and passionate in its opposition to the sale of this property.

Berkeley's Main Post Office sits at the heart of our civic center and our city. To privatize this much loved landmark will diminish all that we have done to improve the downtown. It will also deprive citizens of their right to view the incomparable WPA murals, created with public funds and owned by all of us.

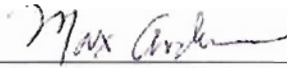
Our question to you is: What does it take for you not to sell this beautiful public building?

Please reconsider the sale and work with the City and the people of Berkeley to save our heritage and keep the Post Office in public hands. We are also requesting that the City be informed of when our appeal will be heard so we can be present for the deliberations.

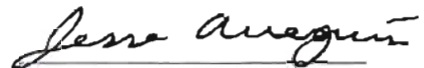
Sincerely,



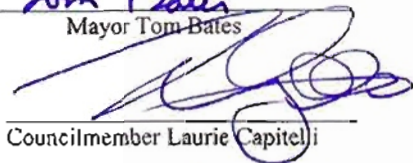
Mayor Tom Bates



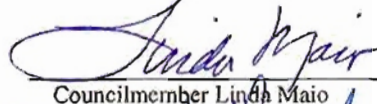
Councilmember Max Anderson



Councilmember Jesse Arreguin



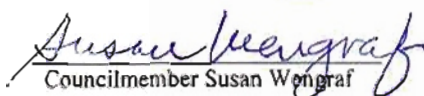
Councilmember Laurie Capitelli



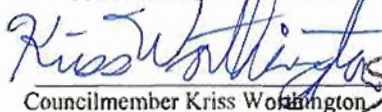
Councilmember Linda Maio



Councilmember Darryl Moore



Councilmember Susan Wengraf



Councilmember Kriss Worthington



Councilmember Gordon Wozniak

Cc: Patrick Donahoe, Postmaster General and Chief Executive Officer

Diana Alvarado, Real Estate, Facilities Implementation, USPS Pacific Region.

The Honorable Ander Crenshaw, Chairman Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government

The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Minority Member, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

The Honorable Tom Carper, Chairman, Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

The Honorable Barbara Lee, United States Congress, CD 13

The Honorable Jackie Speier, United States Congress, CD 14

The Honorable Eric Swalwell, United States Congress, CD 15

The Honorable George Miller, United States Congress, CD 11

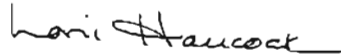
The Honorable Dianne Feinstein, United States Senate

The Honorable Barbara Boxer, United States Senate

** Please see the attached addendum for local elected officials in support of the City of Berkeley's appeal.

Addendum

The following local elected leaders are in support of the City of Berkeley's appeal of the USPS decision to sell the Berkeley Main Post Office.



Senator Loni Hancock
California State Senate



Assemblymember Nancy Skinner
California State Assembly



Supervisor Keith Carson
Alameda County Supervisor

RESOLUTION NO. 66,025–N.S.

OPPOSING THE SALE OF THE BERKELEY MAIN POST OFFICE

WHEREAS, the United States Postal Service (USPS) has announced the possible sale of Berkeley's historic and heavily used Main Post Office located at 2000 Allston Way; and

WHEREAS, the Berkeley Main Post Office is both an official landmark of the City of Berkeley and is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places; and

WHEREAS, on July 31, 2012 the City Council created the Post Office Subcommittee; and

WHEREAS, USPS will be holding a public meeting on February 26, 2013 to explain the proposal and hear comments from the public; and

WHEREAS, USPS has a 15 day written public comment period that will expire on March 13, 2013 and the City Council wishes to submit this resolution before the public comment period ends; and

WHEREAS, on February 12, 2013 the Post Office Subcommittee held a public meeting where members of the community had the opportunity to address their concerns regarding the possible sale of the Berkeley Main Post Office.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City of Berkeley formally opposes the sale of the Historic Berkeley Main Post Office building and requests that the United States Postal Service maintain existing services at the Berkeley Main Post Office.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the USPS suspend, for one year, efforts to sell the Berkeley Main Post Office building and work with the City of Berkeley with the goal of continuing the USPS's ownership of the building, and the leasing of the rear portion of the building to provide an ongoing income stream to the USPS.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Berkeley requests that USPS immediately impose a moratorium on all sales of Post Office buildings nationwide.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Berkeley will request that its federal representatives hold hearings on the requirement that the USPS pre-fund its pension obligations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Berkeley shall reach out to other cities affected by the sale of postal facilities to develop a collective response.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution will be sent to the USPS, Congress members Lee and Speier, Senators Feinstein and Boxer and President Obama prior to the expiration of the public comment period which ends on March 13, 2013.

The foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Berkeley City Council on March 5, 2013 by the following vote:

Ayes: Anderson, Arreguin, Capitelli, Maio, Moore, Wengraf, Wozniak and Bates.

Noes: None.

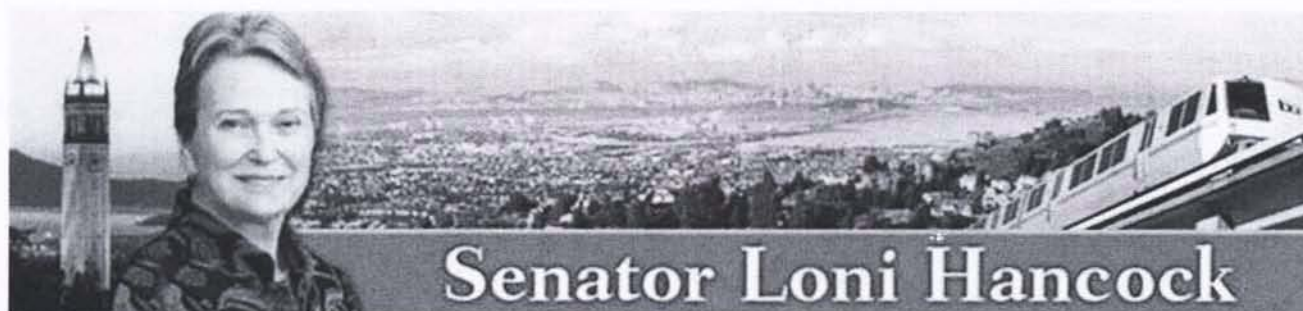
Absent: Worthington.



Tom Bates, Mayor

Attest: 

Mark Numairville, CMC, City Clerk



Office of Senator Loni Hancock (D-Berkeley)
For Immediate Release

Contact: Larry Levin
Office: (916) 651-4009
Cell: (916) 203-2005

May 2, 2013

PRESS ADVISORY

**POST OFFICE PRESS CONFERENCE IN BERKELEY
ON FRIDAY, MAY 3RD, 10 a.m.**

**STATE & CITY OFFICIALS WILL SIGN & “PUT IN THE MAIL”
FORMAL APPEAL OF DECISION TO CLOSE BERKELEY MAIN POST
OFFICE**

- WHAT:** Press conference to protest plans to close Berkeley post office & signing and mailing of formal appeal.
- WHO:** Senator Loni Hancock (D-Berkeley); Assemblymember Nancy Skinner (D-Berkeley); Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates; City Council members; and others.
- WHERE:** Front Steps of Berkeley Main Post Office, 2000 Alston Way (at Milvia Street), Berkeley
- WHEN:** 10 a.m., Friday, May 3, 2013

Sacramento -- Senator Loni Hancock, Assemblymember Nancy Skinner, Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates and Members of the Berkeley City Council will hold a press conference at Berkeley's Main Post Office on Friday at 10am to sign a joint letter appealing the sale of Berkeley's historic post office as well as call for a moratorium on the sale of all historic post offices across the country.

“Post Office buildings in many communities are beautiful and respected structures that have landmark status and enhance the beauty and vitality of many downtown areas,” Senator Hancock said. “Closing them will only drive away customers, kill a valued public service and destroy downtown buildings that, in many cases, are the soul and heart of local communities.”

-End-

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE

STATE CAPITOL
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA
95814

May 2, 2013

Vice President of Facilities
Facilities Implementation–Pacific Area
United States Postal Service
1300 Evans Ave., Ste. 200
San Francisco, CA 94188-8200

Dear Sir or Madam:

We are writing to formally join the City of Berkeley's appeal of the United States Postal Service's (USPS) decision to sell its historic Main Post office at 2000 Allston Way, in Berkeley.

Built in 1914, the Allston Way Post Office has many significant historical features, including 2 WPA murals, a designation as a City of Berkeley Landmark (1980), a listing on the National Register of Historic Places (1980), and a listing on the National Register as a significant contributor to Berkeley's Civic Center Historic District (1998).

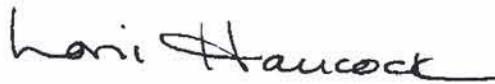
It is our understanding that the sale of federal property to a non-federal entity is considered an adverse effect under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. That process is overseen by California's State Historic Preservation (SHP) Office and requires consultation with SHP and, if a proposed project may have an adverse effect on a historic property, a consideration of alternatives and/or mitigation measures that could lessen that adverse effect.

We are deeply disappointed and concerned about USPS unilaterally making a decision to move forward with the sale despite the City of Berkeley's requests to suspend efforts for one year to allow the City and USPS to work together to find an alternative solution that would put this historic building up for sale and close down a post office that serves over 100,000 people a year at its central downtown location, less than one block from one of the Bay Area's major transit hubs.

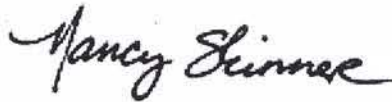
In light of the legislation pending in Congress, S. 316 by Senator Bernie Sanders and H.R. 630 by Representative Peter DeFazio, there should be a moratorium placed on the sale of all historic post offices. The legislation would remove costly burdens currently placed on the Postal Service and allow for a more thorough review of the proposed property sales.

We firmly believe that the closure of Berkeley's Main Post Office and sale of the building would have an adverse effect on the current residents of Berkeley and put at risk a significant historic asset. In addition, serious questions have been raised about whether the proposed sales of any post offices are necessary or appropriate. Therefore, we strongly urge you to reconsider the sale and work with the City of Berkeley to keep the building open as a post office and not sell this historic treasure of national and local significance to the People of Berkeley.

Respectfully,



LONI HANCOCK
California State Senator (SD 09)



NANCY SKINNER
California State Assemblymember (AD 15)

BARBARA LEE
9TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS
Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Subcommittee on
Financial Services and General Government



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-0509

REPLY TO OFFICE CHECKED

WASHINGTON OFFICE
2267 RAYBURN H.O.B.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515
Phone: (202) 225-2661
Fax: (202) 225-9817

DISTRICT OFFICE
1301 CLAY STREET, SUITE 1000N
OAKLAND, CA 94612
Phone: (510) 763-0370
Fax: (510) 763-6538

website: lee.house.gov

April 23, 2013

Vice President, Facilities
Attn: Diana Alvarado
Facilities Implementation – Pacific Area
1300 Evans Ave. Ste. 200
San Francisco CA 94188-0200

Dear Ms. Alvarado,

Please accept this letter as a formal appeal to the United States Postal Service's (USPS) decision to move forward with the approved sale and relocation of the Berkeley Main Post Office (P.O.) Thank you in advance for including this letter in your formal record of appeal.

Over the last year, my staff and I have worked diligently with the City of Berkeley and community stakeholders to convince USPS of the importance of this historic landmark and the necessity of its use as a community post office, by tradition and design. I have previously voiced my strong opposition to the sale through all official channels, including to your facilities department, USPS government affairs, Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe, and Deputy Post Master General Ronald Stroman. My constituents have also spent a great deal of time and energy trying to protect this 99-year-old institution, as detailed in a March 7, 2013 front-page article in the *New York Times*.

Since 2010, California's 13th Congressional District (formerly the Ninth) has seen the closure of at least three central post office locations (Oakland City Kaiser Center, Berkeley Park, Oakland Station B). The additional loss of the downtown Berkeley P.O. will be felt throughout my District by seniors, persons with limited mobility, and all who seek to preserve this beloved property for public use. As you are aware, the entire building is an architectural landmark that has been recognized on the National Register of Historic Places. This is a post office that really symbolizes Berkeley's arrival into the modern, New Deal era, and which contains an important Works Progress-Administration-commissioned mural—which should be available at all times for public viewing.

I would also like to strongly emphasize that this building was constructed at a time when the Postal Service was directly funded through taxpayer dollars and was designed specifically to be a post office. It would not be serving its true and original purpose if it was something other than a post office. Relocation is not a suitable option for my constituents, and I wholly agree with them and support their concerns.

This appeal has the broad support of local elected leaders, USPS employees, and community members who have contacted my office to express their solidarity with this request. Therefore, I urge USPS to reverse its decision to close and relocate the Berkeley Main Post Office and to halt any impending sale of the building. Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Barbara Lee
Member of Congress