



Congressman José E. Serrano

Representing the Fifteenth District of New York

P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Serrano Provision in Spending Bill Checks on Lawfulness of Bronx Post Office Sale

Washington, DC – July 19, 2013 – Congressman José E. Serrano today announced that he had succeeded in including a provision in an annual appropriations bill moving through the House of Representatives that would ensure that the Postal Service’s proposed sale of the historic Bronx General Post Office receives extra scrutiny.

“I feel strongly that the US Postal Service’s plan to sell the Bronx General Post Office is ill-considered, and perhaps did not follow the requirements of the laws governing such transactions,” said Congressman Serrano. “With the inclusion of this provision in the annual spending bill guiding parts of the USPS budget, Congress now shares my concerns, and we are going to ensure that all laws and guidelines have been followed.

“These actions follow on the heels of an ongoing investigation--undertaken at my urging--by the Inspector General of the Postal Service into whether the Postal Service has followed all relevant laws in the sales of historic post offices, and whether they have followed those laws in the case of the Bronx

General Post Office. My provision in the bill calls for the suspension of the sale of historic properties like the Bronx GPO until this investigation is complete, and all the laws and guidelines have been satisfactorily complied with.

“It should go without saying that we expect the Postal Service to follow every single requirement if they are determined to sell the Bronx General Post Office. It is too important of a building to our community, especially with its historically significant murals, which were created by artist Ben Shahn in the Depression, and have been enjoyed by Bronx residents for generations. They should not be given to a private party never to be seen by the public again.

“We cannot have the gems of our communities, often landmarked and protected, sold by the USPS to the top bidder in a wanton and careless manner. These properties have unique circumstances and deserve great care and thought if the USPS can truly no longer use them. I am concerned that this is not happening in the rush to reduce costs, and I am glad that my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee share this concern.”

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Congressman José E. Serrano has represented The Bronx in Congress since 1990.