

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 28th

The Honorable Tammy Whitcomb Hull
USPS Office of the Inspector General
1735 N. Lynn Street
Arlington, VA 22209-2020

Dear Inspector General Whitcomb Hull,

I write to request that you launch an investigation into the historic mistreatment of the Silver Cliff, Colorado community by the United States Postal Service (USPS). Since 1991, Silver Cliff has experienced significant postal issues caused by the deactivation of their ZIP code, but their concerns have been ignored by USPS. I feel strongly that an investigation into this mistreatment is crucial to prompt reparatory action.

Despite having a unique and separate ZIP Code from the neighboring town of Westcliffe since 1879, in 1991, Silver Cliff's ZIP Code, 81249, was deactivated resulting in postal delivery and service issues. Residents frequently complain that mail and packages are incorrectly delivered to duplicate addresses in Westcliffe, resulting in not only delayed delivery, but lost mail. This issue has only been exacerbated by USPS' staffing shortages, as temporary workers from out of town are not aware of the duplicate addresses and unwittingly misdeliver mail even more frequently.

Since 1991, Silver Cliff has submitted multiple requests for their ZIP Code to be restored, all of which have been denied. These repeated applications to USPS for their ZIP Code to be restored come at a significant financial cost to the small municipality. In correspondence from USPS to my office on March 6, 2023, the issues facing Silver Cliff's mail delivery program were flat out ignored: "District and Local officials assure us that mail delivery has been consistent and current".

I feel strongly that it is incumbent upon USPS to ensure that they are accountable to their mission of providing reliable, affordable, and universal mail service. I request that the office of the Inspector General consider expeditiously completing a full and fair investigation into the mistreatment of Silver Cliff, Colorado. I strongly urge officials to consider the fact that Silver Cliff successfully had a separate ZIP Code from Westcliffe, and that Silver Cliff and Custer County officials contend a total lack of public input in the 1991 decision.

Thank you for your full and fair consideration of this request in accordance with all applicable rules, regulations, laws, and guidelines as Silver Cliff seeks the restoration of their original ZIP code.

Sincerely,



Brittany Pettersen
Member of Congress