[BOOKSTORE LETTERHEAD]

[DATE]

[THE HONORABLE] [FULL NAME OF LAWMAKER]

[ADDRESS]

Dear [Senator/Congressman/Congresswoman][last name]:

As an independent bookseller in [city], news that Amazon has struck a deal with the United States Postal Service (USPS) to enable it to offer its customers Sunday delivery is unsettling, to say the least. I urge you to look further into this matter, and request that the [Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee] [House Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, U.S. Postal Service & The Census] examine the business practices of the USPS to determine if an arrangement that provides special treatment for one retail corporation is in the best interests of taxpayers.

Lately there have been many reports that the postal service receives no taxpayer money, but, as you undoubtedly know, this is simply untrue. Congress provides USPS with $100 million each year, and that money comes from taxpayers like me.

It should never be the role of the federal government to pick favorites from among competing businesses, and the use of taxpayer money to facilitate exclusive services to a multi-billion-dollar online retailer is, I believe, questionable. USPS ought to provide a neutral playing field for all retailers looking to take advantage of its delivery infrastructure.

Many state governments already subsidize online retailers such as Amazon.com by allowing them to sell into the state without collecting and remitting sales tax, despite their having nexus in the state. Because of this, I and other Main Street retailers already face an unfair disadvantage, and the news of this exclusive USPS agreement with Amazon -- coming at the start of the holiday season -- simply makes a bad situation worse.

I also believe that allowing a private corporation to purchase the services of a government agency without a thoroughly transparent and open process sets a very dangerous precedent.

Many legislators extoll the important role that small businesses play in the economy, but all too often special arrangements get made with massive multinational corporations that make it harder and harder for small businesses to compete. I am more than happy to compete with companies like Amazon.com on a level playing field, but when the government places its thumb on their side of the scale it becomes more difficult to succeed.

I hope you'll take a look at this arrangement and let me know what you think.

Sincerely,