

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

4TH DISTRICT, NEW JERSEY

CONSTITUENT SERVICE CENTERS:

1540 Kuser Road, Suite A9
Hamilton, NJ 08619-3828
(609) 585-7878
TTY (609) 585-3650

108 Lacey Road, Suite 38A
Whiting, NJ 08759-1331
(732) 350-2300

2373 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-3004
(202) 225-3765

<http://chrissmith.house.gov>



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

September 25, 2012

Secretary Brenda Sprague
Deputy Assistant Secretary
Consular Affairs

Dear Secretary Sprague,

I would like to thank you for meeting with my friend and Monmouth County Clerk, Claire French. I'm sure we can agree that she possesses the positive and caring attributes we would all like to see in those who serve the public.

Claire is faced with serving a population with very limited resources. Of most importance is the inability to meet the limited service hours currently provided by the United States Postal Service. Not only is transportation an issue but losing precious income is a concern for those working on the farms and surrounding rural areas of Monmouth County. I found it striking when Claire recounted the number of times patrons visiting the Clerk's office complaining that they tried to submit through the Postal Service only to have their passport applications returned to them for additional documents; an illustration of wasted time and loss wages.

Service has been the driving force behind this proposal; to serve where a need exists; particularly Asbury, Long Branch and Neptune Monmouth County, all officially designated by the State of New Jersey as Abbott districts.

Claire, I feel, articulated her proposal clearly and affectively and appreciates, as I do, your offer to reconsider her state of the art facility in Neptune and explore the option of occasional Passport Fairs. Again, thank you for agreeing to meet with Claire. We both look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH
Member of Congress

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