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June 3, 2020

Secretary of State Jesse White
Illinois Secretary of State's Office
213 State Capitol
Springfield, Illinois 62756

Re: Closing of Former Orland Park Express Facility

Dear Secretary of State White:

Monday evening, a member of our local media approached me with questions regarding the closure of the Secretary of State's Orland Park Express Facility. Much to my shock, I was informed that a spokesperson from your office had stated that the facility was closed at the demand of the Village of Orland Park.

As you are aware, the Orland Park Express Facility was temporarily closed in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to that time, Village staff had been in ongoing communications with members of your staff regarding various options for this location.

In December 2019, Village staff reached out to your staff in order to initiate discussions regarding formalizing the Secretary of State's use of the Orland Park Village Hall, a space your office has utilized rent-free and lease-free for over 25 years. That request included a market-based rent and proper insurance and indemnification to protect the taxpayers of Orland Park.

Your staff instead countered that the facility available at the Village was too small to meet the Secretary of State's Office long-term needs and instead suggested relocation. Knowing this, and in the best interest of all parties, the Village committed to allowing your office to stay at our facility until a seamless relocation could be made.

Immediately, Village staff began working collaboratively with your staff to locate a space that would meet the short and long-term goals of the Secretary of State's Office. Village staff contacted numerous local property owners and provided your staff with multiple leads. Additionally, Village staff took your staff on a tour of available properties that met your office's prerequisite requirements. Ultimately, your representatives chose an ideal location at the Marley Creek Shopping Center.

The Marley Creek Shopping Center was chosen by your staff because it met every prerequisite and would have enabled your office to provide expanded and enhanced services, including Real ID. As

you know, the Orland Park Express Facility did not provide Real ID services and the Village received ongoing complaints as a result of the lack of this service, considering the looming Real ID deadline.

After the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, your staff realized their inability to safely operate at Village Hall while meeting appropriate safety protocols. Therefore, Village staff went the extra mile to get the Marley Creek property owner to agree to provide you a rent-free temporary space so that your operations would experience no additional downtime while your new permanent lease was negotiated and space build-out was completed.

Village staff led the charge to assist the Secretary of State's office in formalizing a lease arrangement, and quickly pivoted to meet each new request of your staff, going so far as to identify spaces meeting your needs, setting up meetings with landlords, and even negotiating rent-free transitional space to ensure no additional downtime following the COVID-19 closures. In fact, Village staff offered free moving assistance to reduce the operational and cost burden on your office.

Even while your staff was moving out of the Village Hall, we were continuously informed that they were relocating to the Marley Creek Shopping Center. Only upon completion of move-out, when we inquired as to a new address to assist your customers in finding your new location, were we first told that the Orland Park location was permanently closed. This, coupled with the fact that apparently the spokesperson for the Secretary of State's Office is disingenuously indicating that the Village demanded the closure of the facility, demonstrates a complete lack of respect to the people of Orland Park who, for a quarter-century, have provided the Secretary of State's Office rent-free facilities.

I am requesting two things. First, a retraction from your spokesperson. The statements made by your spokesperson do not accurately reflect the events leading to the closure of the Orland Park Express Facility. Second, I urge your office to follow-through with its original plans to provide a full-service facility in Orland Park that provides Real ID, road tests and license plate sticker renewals.

I understand the dire financial situation that the State of Illinois has found itself in. However, the residents of Orland Park and surrounding communities deserve a full-service Secretary of State facility. For a quarter-century, the taxpayers of Orland Park provided the Secretary of State's Office rent-free facilities. Additionally, the taxpayers of Orland Park contribute approximately \$250 million in tax revenue annually to the State of Illinois. I urge your office to provide a full-service facility that provides Real ID, road tests and license plate stickers.

Sincerely,

Keith Pekau
Village President, Village of Orland Park