June 12, 2013

Citizens’ Stamp Advisory Committee
c/o Stamp Development
U.S. Postal Service
475 L’Enfant Plaza SW, Room 3300
Washington, DC  20260-3501

RE: Claude Elwood Shannon’s Centenary US Postal Stamp

To the Citizens’ Stamp Advisory Committee:

I am writing this letter in support of the proposal to honor Claude Elwood Shannon with a commemorative U.S. Postal Service stamp upon the Centennial of his birth, April 30, 1916.

Considered the founding father of the electronic communication age, Claude Shannon’s work ushered in the digital revolution as he laid the groundwork for both the computer industry and telecommunications. Considered the Magna Carta of communication, Shannon’s Information Theory first appeared 65 years ago in his 1948 Bell System Technical Journal Paper “The Mathematical Theory of Communication.” As Information Theory has been such a profound development, history will remember Shannon as one of the greatest thinkers ever in the field of engineering.

Indeed Shannon’s classical information theory paved the way for the Internet, DVDs, mobile devices, and other innovations of today. His reach has been profound in many areas as Shannon’s ideas have been applied in such diverse fields as Psychology, linguistics, economics and biology.

So it is with the utmost conviction that I support this proposal. Shannon’s scientific influence and advancements are most worthy of this distinction.

Sincerely,

Wojciech Szpankowski
Director of Center for Science of Information, NSF STC
Saul Rosen Professor of Computer Science, Purdue University