

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 6, 2020

Mr. Louis DeJoy
Postmaster General
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W., Room 10300
Washington, D.C. 20260-1000

Dear Postmaster General DeJoy:

We are writing to express deep concerns about operational changes at the U.S. Postal Service that could have negative impacts on service standards and cause significant delays in mail delivery. It is vital that the U.S. Postal Service does not reduce mail delivery hours, which could harm rural communities, seniors, small businesses, and millions of Americans who rely on the mail for critical letters and packages.

On July 14, 2020, official Postal Service documents were made public that outline significant changes to Postal Service operations. The documents detail a number of operational changes which “will be implemented in short order.” These changes include eliminating overtime and restrictions on certain letter carrier activities. The document states, “if we cannot deliver all mail” as a result of staffing shortages, “the mail will not go out.”¹ The documents also detail transportation changes being implemented immediately to reduce costs, including prohibiting extra trips to deliver mail even if it means “mail left behind or mail on the workroom floor or docks.” These changes will be part of an “ongoing pivot, which will have a number of phases” that the Postal Service will “swiftly implement.”²

On July 17, 2020, the Postal Service also announced a new initiative called Expedited to Street/Afternoon Sortation (ESAS). This initiative is designed to reduce morning office time for letter carriers and move the mail sorting process to the afternoon and is being implemented in selected zip codes across the country. We are concerned that this could further delay mail delivery times, a concern shared by stakeholders.

On July 22, 2020, your General Counsel and Executive Vice President sent a letter to the Oversight Committee claiming that these documents are not “official Postal Service memoranda.” His letter argued that these documents were prepared by a “mid-level manager”

¹ Alliance of Nonprofit Mailers, *Leaked USPS PowerPoint Indicates DeJoy Focus on Getting Operating Costs Under Control*, (July 14, 2020) (online at www.nonprofitmailers.org/leaked-usps-powerpoint-indicates-pmg-dejoy-focus-on-getting-operating-costs-under-control/).

² *Internal USPS Document Tells Employees to Leave Mail at Distribution Centers*, Washington Post (July 14, 2020) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/context/internal-usps-document-tells-employees-to-leave-mail-at-distribution-centers/175dd1ae-e202-4777-877c-33442338d1cc/).

and another official who distributed them only in “the Southern Area,” so they “should not be treated as official statements of Postal Service policy.”³

Unfortunately, his letter did not explain why these Postal Service officials issued these directives, or how they came to believe these policies should be implemented in their offices. Moreover, stakeholders including the American Postal Workers Union and letter carriers have reported similar practices being put in place across the country, indicating that these are not isolated incidents or the actions of rogue mid-level managers. The letter did not even mention the new ESAS initiative, which we learned of through press accounts.

While we share the goal of ensuring the Postal Service’s solvency, the rhetoric used in these documents compares the Postal Service to a private company concerned only with the bottom line, rather than the constitutionally mandated public service that it is. Eliminating overtime and directing postal workers to leave mail on the floor of postal facilities will erode confidence in the Postal Service and drive customers away, resulting in even worse financial conditions in the future.

In addition, no one from the Postal Service consulted with any relevant unions, the mailing and package industry, or other stakeholders before taking these drastic actions. These changes were also made without consultation with Members of Congress that are in ongoing negotiations over additional financial support for the Postal Service.

Before presenting any official business plan before the Board of Governors, it is crucial that the Postal Service brief Members of Congress and ensure their input is registered. To fail to do so, would be harmful to the efforts of those Members of Congress who are working diligently to craft cohesive postal reform legislation that would secure the USPS’s future for decades to come. Ignoring Congressional efforts and insight would only serve to hurt the service and the constituents it has served since its creation.

Millions of Americans rely heavily on the Postal Service for the delivery of essential items—including medications—particularly during the coronavirus pandemic. The operational changes reportedly taking place around the country put in doubt the ability of ill or at-risk populations to receive their medications on time, which could have dire results.

If the claims in your General Counsel’s letter are accurate—that these recently publicized documents should not be treated as official statements of Postal Service policy—then we urge you to immediately issue a directive to all Postal Service offices and employees explaining that none of the changes in these documents is valid, none of them was approved by Postal Service headquarters, and none of them should go into effect.

³ Letter from Thomas J. Marshall, General Counsel and Executive Vice President, U.S. Postal Service, to Chairwoman Carolyn B. Maloney et al., Committee on Oversight and Reform (July 22, 2020) (online at oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/Marshall%20Response%20to%20Maloney%20et%20al%20re%20USPS%20Operational%20Changes_07-22-2020.pdf)

Mr. Louis DeJoy

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We stand ready to work with you on improving the financial condition of the Postal Service, in a way that guarantees the American people's continued access to critical postal services in a timely manner.

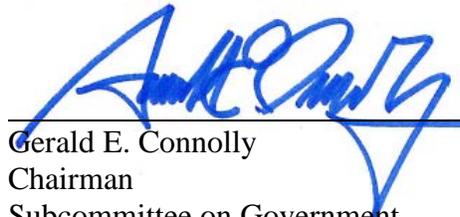
Sincerely,



Carolyn B. Maloney
Chairwoman
Committee on Oversight and Reform



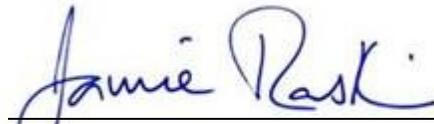
Peter King
Member of Congress



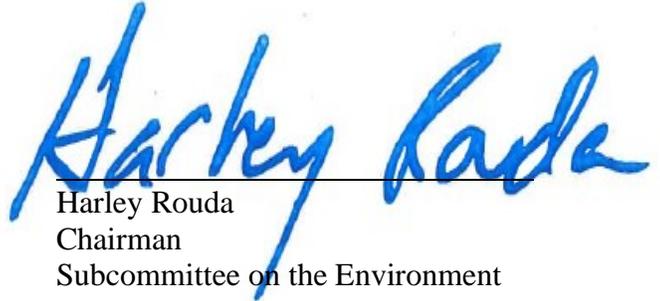
Gerald E. Connolly
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government
Operations



Stephen F. Lynch
Chairman
Subcommittee on National Security



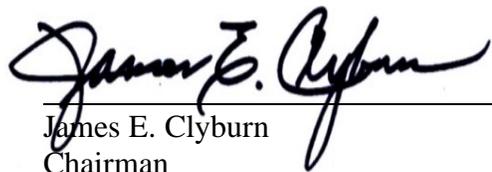
Jamie Raskin
Chairman
Subcommittee on Civil Rights and
Civil Liberties



Harley Rouda
Chairman
Subcommittee on the Environment



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Chairman
Subcommittee on Economic and
Consumer Policy



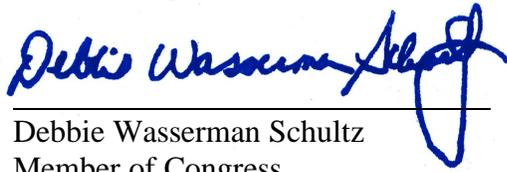
James E. Clyburn
Chairman
Select Subcommittee on the
Coronavirus Crisis



Brenda L. Lawrence
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



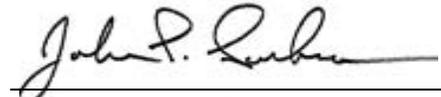
Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



Jackie Speier
Member of Congress



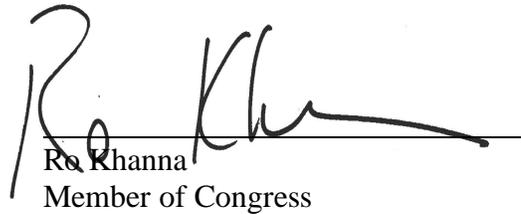
Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



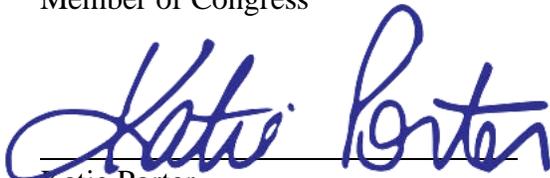
John P. Sarbanes
Member of Congress



Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress



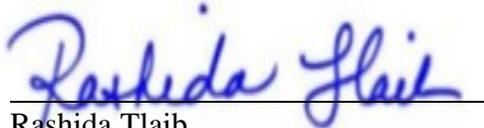
Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



Katie Porter
Member of Congress



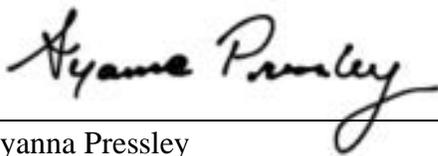
Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress



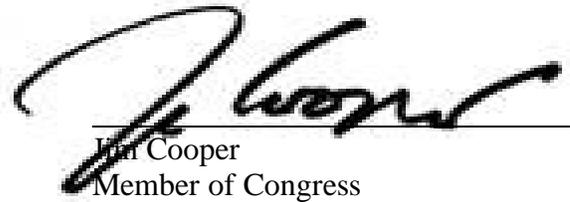
Rashida Tlaib
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Peter Welch
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Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress



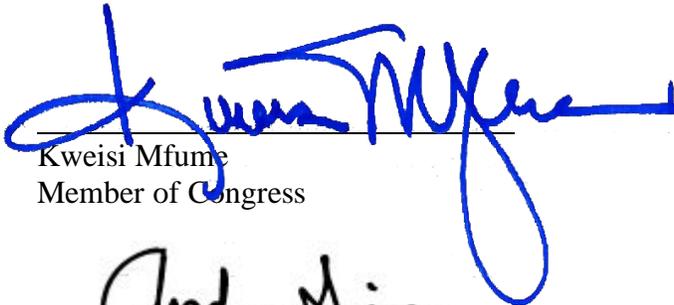
Tim Cooper
Member of Congress



Wm. Lacy Clay
Member of Congress



Deb Haaland
Member of Congress



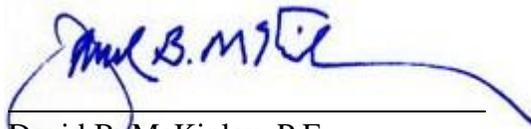
Kweisi Mfume
Member of Congress



Andy Kim
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Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



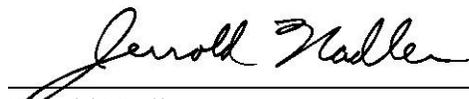
David B. McKinley, P.E.
Member of Congress



Mike Thompson
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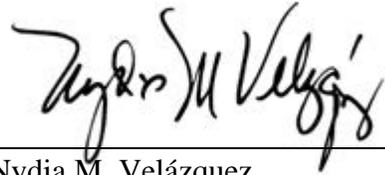
Max Rose
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Jerrold Nadler
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James P. McGovern
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Nydia M. Velázquez
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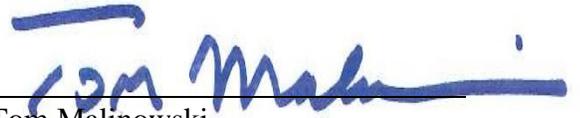
Gwen Moore
Member of Congress



Tim Ryan
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Suzan K. DelBene
Member of Congress



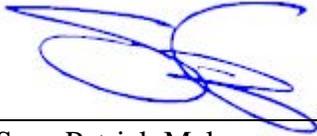
Tom Malinowski
Member of Congress



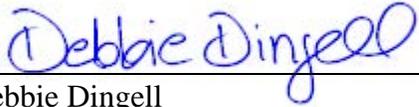
Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress



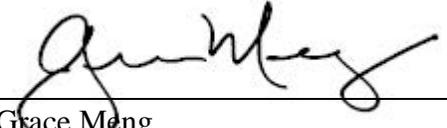
Donald Norcross
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Grace Meng
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Daniel Webster
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Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress



Dean Phillips
Member of Congress



Jahana Hayes
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Joseph D. Morelle
Member of Congress



Vicente Gonzalez
Member of Congress



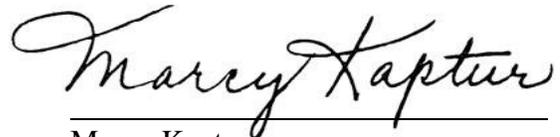
Jared Huffman
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Marcy Kaptur
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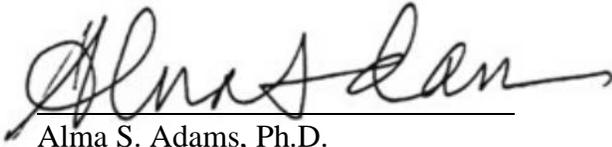
Frank Pallone, Jr.
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Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



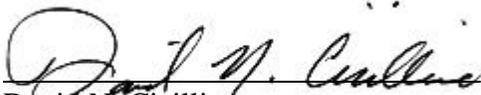
Mary Gay Scanlon
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Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
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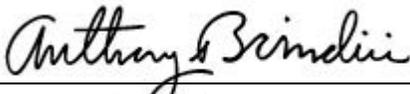
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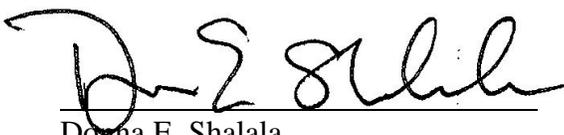
Denny Heck
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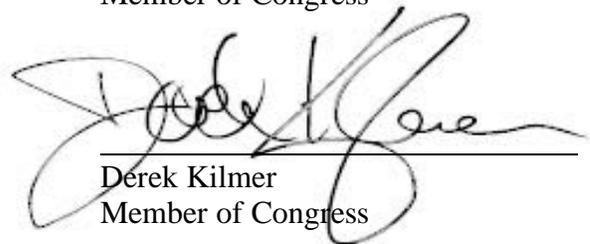
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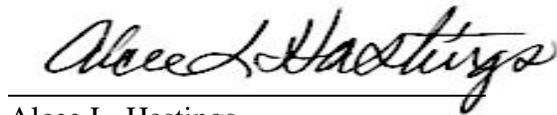
Filemon Vela
Member of Congress



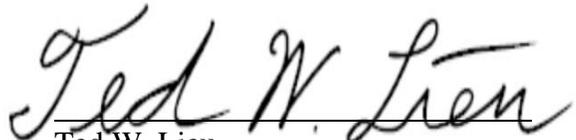
Lizzie Fletcher
Member of Congress



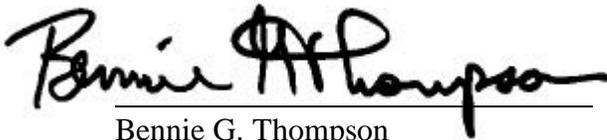
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Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress



Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



Chris Pappas
Member of Congress



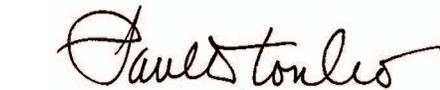
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Daniel Webster
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Cindy Axne
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Paul D. Tonko
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Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress