Opening Statement of Robert Steffens

Before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Confirmation Hearing, the United States Postal Service Board of Governors

June 17, 2026

Chairman Paul, Ranking Member Peters, and distinguished Members of the Committee:

It is a privilege to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve on the Board of Governors of the United States Postal Service. I am grateful to the President for the confidence this nomination represents, and I take seriously the Committee's constitutional role in reviewing that nomination. I welcome this process and welcome your questions.

I have spent my career at the intersection of business, finance, and operations, building and leading organizations, managing complexity, and working through numerous, varied challenges. I have led finance functions, overseen supply chains, managed capital allocation decisions, and navigated the demands of competitive markets where operational execution and financial discipline are critical.

I do not come from the postal world. What I bring is deep experience in exactly the disciplines the Postal Service needs most at this moment: financial sustainability, operational modernization, and the management of complex organizations through periods of structural change. I believe that perspective with rigorous, financially grounded discipline is what the Board requires at this juncture, and I commit to bringing it fully to this role.

The United States Postal Service is one of the most consequential institutions in American life. It is easy, in an era of digital communication, to underestimate what the Postal Service does. It touches every address in the United States with over 150 million delivery points six days a week. It connects rural communities to commerce and to each other. It delivers prescription medications to elderly Americans who have no other reliable means of receiving them. It moves small business packages, legal documents, election ballots, and the correspondence of ordinary citizens with a reach that no private carrier matches.

That mission is not a legacy artifact. It is a living public good, and it is one that this country has an ongoing obligation to sustain. I do not come before this Committee with any intention of diminishing that mission. I come with the intention of ensuring the institution is financially capable of fulfilling it, not just today, but for the generations that will depend on it after us.

I want to speak directly about the challenges, because I believe this Committee deserves candor rather than reassurance.

The Postal Service faces structural financial pressures that are real and not simple to remedy. First-class mail volume has declined significantly over the past two decades and will not recover.

That revenue base was the financial foundation upon which the institution was built, and its erosion requires a fundamental rethinking of the cost and business model of the USPS.

At the same time, package delivery, where volume has grown substantially, operates in a competitive market where the Postal Service must earn its position against well-capitalized private carriers. That is a fundamentally different business than the monopoly mail model, and it requires a fundamentally different operational and financial approach.

I do not believe that the current challenges are insurmountable. I do believe they require a Board that is willing to ask hard questions, that will not accept financial opacity, and that will hold management accountable for execution against a credible long-term plan.

One of the areas where I believe my background is most directly relevant is the modernization agenda. The Postal Service has made meaningful investments in infrastructure and technology in recent years, and I support the direction of that work. But modernization is not a project with a completion date, it is a continuous discipline, and it requires governance that understands technology investment not as a cost to be minimized but as a capability to be built.

I have overseen technology modernization in my own organizations. I have seen what happens when technology investment is deferred until the cost of not investing exceeds the cost of acting. I have also seen what happens when technology investment is pursued without the operational and financial discipline to ensure it delivers the intended returns. The Board's role is to ensure the Postal Service navigates between them — investing boldly where modernization enables the mission, and demanding accountability for outcomes when it does not.

I am particularly interested in the intersection of technology and workforce. The Postal Service employs approximately 640,000 people. Technology decisions are workforce decisions. I believe modernization and workforce respect are not in conflict, a well-run, technology-enabled Postal Service is a better employer and a more sustainable one, but that alignment requires leadership that takes both seriously.

The Board of Governors is an independent body, and I intend to serve as an independent member of it. I have no financial interest in the outcome of any postal policy decision. I have no relationship with any entity that competes with or contracts with the Postal Service that would compromise my judgment. I intend to review my obligations under the applicable ethics requirements carefully and to comply with them fully.

I also want to be direct about the role of this Committee and of Congress more broadly. The Postal Service is a creature of statute. It exists because Congress created it, and it operates within a framework that Congress has the authority and the responsibility to shape. I do not view congressional oversight as an obstacle to good governance; I view it as a check that is appropriate to an institution of this scale and public significance. I commit to being responsive to this Committee, to providing the information you need to exercise your oversight responsibilities, and to communicating openly when the institution faces challenges that require legislative attention.

I am under no illusion that this role is easy. The challenges facing the Postal Service are structural, financial, and political. They will require sustained effort, honest analysis, and a willingness to make difficult recommendations when the evidence demands it.

I am ready for that work. I am committed to the mission. And I am grateful for the opportunity to serve.

I look forward to the Committee's questions.

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