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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

May 18, 2026

The Honorable Tammy Hull
Inspector General
United States Postal Service Office of Inspector General
1735 N. Lynn Street
Arlington, VA 22209-2020

Dear Inspector General Hull:

I write regarding the United States Postal Service Office of Inspector General's (USPS OIG) recent initiation of an audit to evaluate the safety practices in USPS facilities. According to the Postal Service, there were 859 serious accidents and 5 workplace related deaths between 2020 and 2025.¹ As you undertake this important audit, I ask that you review specific aspects of facility safety.

The safety of the Postal Service's workforce is paramount. Every employee of USPS should know that their workplace will be held to the highest safety standards and that they will be able to return home without harm each day after serving the American public. Safety should be of the highest priority to the Postal Service and its management. As the Inspector General, you and your office play an important role assessing USPS safety standards and protocols and ensuring that USPS upholds and adheres to those standards.

Unfortunately, there have recently been tragedies at USPS facilities, including in my home state of Michigan. In November of last year, Nicholas Acker, a maintenance mechanic at the Detroit Network Distribution Center (NDC) in Allen Park, MI, died during an industrial accident. Alarming, NDC employees and management did not know Mr. Acker was missing until his personal items were discovered after his shift had ended and employees and management realized that he had not clocked out. Ultimately, Mr. Acker was not discovered for approximately six to eight hours, and only then was emergency response finally contacted.

¹ Letter from Michael Gordon, United States Postal Service to Senator Gary Peters (Dec. 22, 2025) (copy on file with Committee)

The Postal Service and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) both launched investigations in response to this tragedy. In May 2026, OSHA completed its inspection and issued multiple citations to USPS for safety failures related to USPS's lockout/tagout program and reached a settlement with USPS.²

I am encouraged that the Inspector General has launched a safety audit of postal facilities after conversations between our offices. It is vitally important that this audit be comprehensive and evaluate the various safety concerns associated with postal facilities and processing plants. To that end, I request that your review of USPS facility safety include the following items:

1. To what extent do USPS employees receive adequate training of safety protocols, including facility, craft, and machine specific training.
2. The degree to which facilities adhere to uniform and standardized safety protocols or fluctuate their adherence based on size, function, culture, and/or management.
3. The existence of emergency response protocols and adequate equipment, including defibrillators, first-aid kits, and emergency phones.
4. The ability of emergency responders to enter and exit facilities and the enforcement of existing safety protocols, including any differences between documented safety protocols and actual facility practices.
5. Universal lockout/tagout protocols, training, and implementation (including machine-specific expectations).
6. The effect of any staffing shortages and any pressure for on-time mail delivery time on safety practices.
7. The sufficiency of safety protocols related to the loading and unloading of trucks, including docking bays and directional mirrors.
8. The use of personal protective equipment and protocols regarding inappropriate or unsafe clothing or attire.
9. Protocol for accounting for employees during and at the conclusion of each shift to ensure that missing or unaccounted for employees are located.
10. Access and adherence to safety grievance procedures, including those established by collective bargaining agreements.

² U.S. Dep't of Lab., Occupational Safety and Health Admin., Citation and Notification of Penalty, No. 1858865 (Apr. 10, 2026) (copy on file with Committee); U.S. Dep't of Lab., Occupational Safety and Health Admin., Informal Settlement Agreement, No. 1858865 (May 7, 2026) (copy on file with Committee).

Furthermore, I ask that as a part of this audit your office conduct field site visits to USPS processing centers in Michigan, including the Detroit NDC in Allen Park. Thank you for your attention to this critical issue and continued rigorous oversight of USPS.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gary C. Peters". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath it.

Gary C. Peters
United States Senator
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs