

# United States Senate

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

GABRIELLE D'ADAMO SINGER, STAFF DIRECTOR  
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July 17, 2020

Mr. Louis DeJoy  
Postmaster General and Chief Executive Officer  
United States Postal Service  
475 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W.  
Room 4012  
Washington, D.C. 20260

Dear Mr. DeJoy:

I am writing to seek information about operational changes at the U.S. Postal Service that have the potential to affect the quality of service for Americans. It is essential that the Postal Service not slow down mail or in any way compromise service for small businesses, rural communities, seniors, and millions of Americans who rely on the mail. On July 14, national publications released two documents that appear to be official Postal Service memoranda. The documents discuss significant changes to Postal Service procedures.

The first document, entitled “PMG’s Expectations and Plan” details a number of operational changes, which the document says “will be implemented in short order.” These include eliminating overtime, restrictions on certain letter carrier activities, and curtailing other measures used to mitigate staffing shortages. It states, “if we cannot deliver all mail” due to shortage of people, “the mail will not go out.” The document states these measures are aimed at cutting costs and “making the USPS financially solvent.” The strong rhetoric about cost-cutting compares the U.S. Postal Service to a private company, rather than framing it as a public service.<sup>1</sup>

The second document, a routine “mandatory stand-up talk” reportedly given to employees across the country, details transportation changes being implemented immediately to reduce costs. These include limitations on extra trips by carriers to deliver mail. The document states, “One aspect of these changes that may be difficult for employees is that –temporarily– we may see mail left behind or mail on the workroom floor or docks.” The document positions these changes as part of an “ongoing pivot, which will have a number of phases” the Postal Service will “swiftly implement.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Leaked USPS PowerPoint indicates PMG DeJoy focus on getting operating costs under control*, Alliance of Nonprofit Mailers, <https://www.nonprofitmailers.org/leaked-usps-powerpoint-indicates-pmg-dejoy-focus-on-getting-operating-costs-under-control> (July 14, 2020).

<sup>2</sup> *Internal USPS document tells employees to leave mail at distribution centers*, Washington Post, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/context/internal-usps-document-tells-employees-to-leave-mail-at-distribution-centers/175dd1ae-e202-4777-877c-33442338d1cc> (July 14, 2020).

Congress, the public, and postal stakeholders should be fully apprised of any proposed changes to postal services, particularly if they will impact the speed of mail delivery for postal customers. Please answer the following questions as soon as possible:

1. Do these documents reflect official Postal Service policy and practice? Please submit a full explanation of each operational change that will be implemented, and a timeline and justification for each.
2. Do these documents reflect your views and plans as Postmaster General (PMG)? Was the Postal Service Board of Governors involved in making these decisions?
  - a. In its public response to the release of these documents, the Postal Service referenced the Board's development of a "business plan to ensure that we will be financially stable and able to continue to provide reliable, affordable, safe and secure delivery." Developing this long-term solvency plan is the responsibility of the Senate-confirmed Governors in addition to the PMG. If these operational changes are part of a long-term solvency plan, why were they made in advance of the development and release of that plan?
3. What effect will these changes have on the Postal Service's service performance and its ability to meet service standards, which measure its ability to deliver mail on time to all customers?
  - a. The Board must request that the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) submit an advisory opinion on any proposed change in the nature of postal services which will generally affect service on a nationwide basis. Did you seek Board approval or a PRC advisory opinion for any of these changes? Do you commit to doing so for any changes that will affect nationwide service?
4. Management and the Board must consider a number of factors under statute, including but not limited to cost, in making operational changes and policy changes. What factors did you analyze and consider before making these changes?

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary C. Peters". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Gary C. Peters  
Ranking Member