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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

July 24, 2020

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The Honorable Louis DeJoy
Postmaster General
United States Postal Service
475 Lenfant Plaza Southwest, Room 10300
Washington, D.C. 20260-0004

Dear Mr. DeJoy,

The purpose of this letter is to call your attention to the serious problems my constituents have experienced regarding mail delivery and to request a meeting with you and your key designated staff to forge a path forward to correct these issues.

By way of background, I have been contacted by constituents who reside and/or work in Belmar, Eatontown, Fair Haven, Lake Como, Lakewood, Little Silver, Neptune, Ocean Township, Red Bank, Tinton Falls and Wall, New Jersey. All have expressed dismay and grave concern as they detail mail delivery problems ranging from receiving no mail for as long as four days; receiving mail sporadically; or receiving only packages.

I have also received telephone calls from several letter carriers advising me that because of new instructions from their supervisors and “headquarters,” they have been unable to complete their mail delivery routes and instead must prioritize parcels over regular first-class mail. This, they say, results in the carriers having to stop delivery of mail for extended periods of time.

Last week, I reached out to Acting Manager of the South Jersey District Office Le Gretta Ross-Rawlins regarding this matter, and in turn my staff received a briefing that identified personnel shortages as the reason for such mail disruption. I recognize that staffing at the Post Office is under greater strain due to COVID-19 quarantining, summer vacations, increased parcel volume and a lack of applicants for temporary work. However, it is troubling to learn that the problem may be so widespread. Additionally, I cannot ignore the reports I have received about a service-wide change in delivery policy, and/or overtime availability and the impact that each may be having on consumers not receiving their first class mail—checks, bills, medicines—on a daily basis.

The mail delivery problems in the towns in my district appear to be a much greater, systemic issue.

Co-Chairman of the following: Task Force on Alzheimer's Disease • Bi-Partisan Taskforce for Combating Anti-Semitism • Lyme Disease Caucus
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As you are no doubt aware, a recent article in the *Washington Post* stated that there is a concerted effort on the part of the United States Postal Service to prioritize packages over marketing mail and single-piece, first-class mail. The article further details a top-down limitation on overtime despite staffing shortages, as well as a bar on extra trips to ensure that all deliveries are made. This report appears to corroborate the first-hand accounts which I have heard from constituents and numerous postal employees. If true, the full implementation of these measures promises to be even more disruptive.

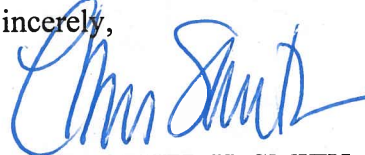
As you may know, throughout my tenure as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, I have consistently opposed efforts to privatize or diminish the services of the USPS because throughout our nation's history, and especially during difficult times, our postal workers have proven vital to America's economy and infrastructure. Similarly, I continue to support proposals in Congress to provide the USPS with a minimum of \$25 billion in emergency funding to ensure USPS can maintain the expected level of service despite the strain of the pandemic and other challenges.

As industries across the country face supply chain interruptions, postal workers are a dependable presence in our neighborhoods and help ensure the delivery of mail, medicines, food items and payments. In times of the COVID-19 stay-at-home orders, our economy is even more reliant on the U.S. Mail.

Considering the implications of this widespread problem we are currently facing, I hope to meet with you, as soon as possible to discuss the mail delivery service throughout my Congressional District.

I thank you for your time and consideration. Please contact my scheduler, Angela Ryan, at 202-225-3765 and Angela.Ryan@mail.house.gov, to find a time that is mutually convenient in the next few days.

Sincerely,



CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH
Member of Congress