

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–2201

February 19, 2025

Board of Governors
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington, DC 20260

Chair McReynolds and Members of the Board of Governors:

I write to you following Postmaster General Louis DeJoy's recent announcement that he intends to step down from his position leading the United States Postal Service (USPS). As you begin the process of evaluating and considering candidates to succeed Postmaster General DeJoy, I strongly urge the Board of Governors (Board) to keep in mind the unique needs and challenges faced by rural communities across the country.

As the only delivery service that reaches every mailbox nationwide, USPS is a vital lifeline for the 66.3 million Americans living in rural and remote areas – keeping them connected to family and friends, essential goods, government and financial services, and health care resources.¹ Rural communities make up nearly 90 percent of the total area served by USPS and their residents rely on close to 60 percent of the country's post offices – illustrating their disproportionate dependence on USPS.² Unlike urban areas, where more concentrated populations allow for more efficient mail delivery, rural homes and businesses are often miles apart, requiring USPS to travel longer distances to serve a smaller number of residents.

Given the challenges associated with rural delivery, combined with an overall decline in mail volume in recent decades, USPS has sought to make changes to its delivery network to improve its financial stability and address operational inefficiencies. While I fully support these laudable goals, I continue to have significant concerns with Postmaster General DeJoy's plan to achieve them, and I implore the Board to consider them in earnest during the appointment process. Certain elements of the Delivering for America plan – namely, processing facility consolidations and the Regional Transportation Optimization (RTO) initiative – are almost certain to have disproportionately negative impacts on rural and remote communities nationwide.

Consolidation of smaller facilities into centralized hubs will force mail to travel longer distances for processing, delaying delivery timelines. Should these consolidations proceed, rural areas – already facing longer delivery routes compared to their urban counterparts, are certain to see even more delays as mail is sent to distant facilities, sometimes across state lines, before returning for local delivery. Further, the RTO initiative, which

¹ United States Census Bureau, "2020 Census Urban Areas Facts," Census, June 2023, <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/geography/guidance/geo-areas/urban-rural/2020-ua-facts.html>.

² United States Postal Service Office of Inspector General, "The Importance of the Postal Service in Rural Areas," USPSOIG, April 18, 2022, <https://www.uspsoig.gov/focus-areas/focus-on/importance-postal-service-rural-areas>.



would see evening mail collection eliminated at post offices more than fifty miles from a centralized distribution hub would effectively add an additional uncounted delivery day for mail originating in these predominantly rural locations.

While these are not the only concerns, they are among the key issues my colleagues and I, as representatives of largely rural congressional districts, have repeatedly raised with Postmaster General DeJoy – only to feel that our concerns were dismissed and not given serious consideration.

As the Board considers candidates to serve our Nation as the 76th Postmaster General of the United States, I urge you – in the strongest terms possible – to prioritize the rural and remote communities across the country that rely on a dependable and effective Postal Service to meet their various needs, no matter their location. USPS has a universal service obligation to deliver to every address, in every ZIP code, in an affordable and timely matter, and I trust you will uphold this commitment throughout the selection process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jack Bergman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.

Jack Bergman
Member of Congress