

DAN NEWHOUSE
4TH DISTRICT, WASHINGTON
www.newhouse.house.gov

504 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
OFFICE (202) 225-5816
FAX (202) 225-3251

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CONGRESSIONAL WESTERN CAUCUS



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February 7, 2024

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

Jennifer Selde
Western States Government Relations Liaison Director United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington DC 20260-0010

Dear Postmaster General DeJoy and Ms. Selde:

I write today regarding two important issues that must be addressed by the United States Postal Service (USPS) to ensure exceptional delivery standards are upheld and election integrity measures are not compromised. Ensuring American postal operations are properly conducted and Americans' right to vote are safeguarded is paramount to our democratic-Republic. I appreciate your full attention to this matter and look forward to your responses.

The first issue, ensuring exceptional delivery standards are upheld, is crucial to all Americans. As you know, on March 23, 2021, USPS announced its ten-year Delivering for America plan "to provide prompt, reliable, and efficient mail and package shipping services to all Americans—regardless of where they live—and at affordable rates." One of the ways USPS intends to achieve this objective is through Mail Processing Facility Review (MPFR). Two post office locations, Wenatchee and Yakima, are currently under review in the congressional district that I have the honor of representing, Washington's 4th.

Based on the MPFRs, some of Wenatchee's operations may be moved to Spokane and some of Yakima's operations may be moved to Seattle. Please answer the following questions for both Wenatchee as well as Yakima, based on USPS's decision-making process:

- 1) What variables does the USPS measure to gauge service standards?
- 2) Do customers in Wenatchee and Yakima currently receive one-day, two-day, three-day, or delayed service and under which conditions does this occur?
- 3) If some of the operations are moved to Spokane or Seattle, how will this impact service standards and for which types of service? I have received conflicting information that the proposed adjustments will increase transport delays by three days each way, totaling six days for service that would have originally only taken one day.

- 4) How will these MPFR decisions impact mail-in ballots and Americans' right to vote?
- 5) How will these MPFR decisions impact Americans' timely access to official documents, checks, bills, prescriptions, and other critically important items?
- 6) How is the USPS factoring in the needs of the most vulnerable populations who consistently rely on timely, affordable, and efficient mail and package delivery services?
- 7) During the winter months, for these two post offices, USPS is already experiencing delays due to closed roads and severe weather conditions. How will USPS ensure services are not delayed or further delayed following any MPFR decisions?
- 8) When and to whom did you send the public release or announcement of this potential change and the opportunity for public input?
- 9) Who made the decision to host the public meeting on this potential process during the middle of the workday and what was their rationale for this decision? I have received information that public turnout was dramatically lower than previous meetings held years ago on this proposed process and the reasons were largely due to timing.
- 10) Are the public comment data, for Wenatchee and Yakima, as well as all MPFR cases, available for public review? If so, please provide the details for public access.
- 11) What percentage of these public comments were in favor, neutral, or opposed to certain parts of the Wenatchee and Yakima MPFRs?
- 12) How are these public comments factored into the MPFR decision-making process?
- 13) Based on USPS's webpage titled "Mail Processing Facility Review", under the column labeled "Status", there appears to be "Notice of Intent", "Public Comment", "Under Review", and "Decision to Proceed." Out of the total number of MPFRs finalized, what percentage received the status, "Decision to Not Proceed" or a similar status based on public opposition?
- 14) Will any employees working in the Wenatchee or Yakima locations lose their jobs? I have received conflicting information ranging from zero, four, eight, or twenty.
- 15) What specific investments will be made into the Wenatchee and Yakima locations? I have received conflicting information that minimal to no changes to machinery will occur and the only improvements will be restroom and breakroom areas.

The second issue, ensuring election integrity measures are not compromised, is critical to all Americans. In the State of Washington, citizens vote by mail and often do so through USPS collection boxes. As you know, ballots from the Washington State November 7, 2023, General Election were discovered and remained in USPS collection boxes until well after Election Day. Preliminary findings identified at least 124 voters' ballots in King and Pierce counties that were potentially disenfranchised. Upon discovery, the Washington Secretary of State sent USPS a letter on November 16, 2023, demanding attention and explanation. USPS responded on November 21, 2023, demonstrating "This matter was immediately rectified"; however, the following day, the Secretary identified that more ballots were discovered by USPS in Clark and Thurston counties, amounting to more than 140 potentially disenfranchised voters' ballots. Based on this situation, will you please answer the following:

- 1) Will you provide an outline of where, when, and how many ballots were discovered?
- 2) Why were these collection boxes not searched in time for Election Day?
- 3) Is there any indication that the policies or processes in place in these identified counties may also be occurring in other counties in the State of Washington?

- 4) Is there a list of collection boxes that are considered in service or out of service?
- 5) What steps are being taken to ensure these concerning mistakes do not occur in the 2024 election?
- 6) Has USPS added or removed any collection boxes in the State of Washington throughout the past three months? If so, please provide this data.
- 7) Does USPS have any plans to add or remove any collection boxes in the State of Washington throughout the year of 2024? If so, please provide this data.
- 8) When and where were the last density tests conducted in the State of Washington?
- 9) Will you make the results of those tests available to the public?
- 10) How have you communicated with the public and local elected officials to ensure there will not be a disruption in the service delivered to these communities?

It is imperative that these questions are answered so we may ensure exceptional delivery standards are upheld and election integrity measures are not compromised. I look forward to your swift attention to this request. I stand ready to meet with representatives at the earliest possible opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dan Newhouse". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dan" and last name "Newhouse" clearly legible.

Dan Newhouse
Member of Congress