

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0607

Postmaster General David Steiner
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington, D.C. 20260

June 29, 2026

Dear Postmaster General Steiner,

We write to request information regarding the United States Postal Service's preparedness to ensure the timely and reliable delivery of election mail leading up to the upcoming federal elections, with particular attention to service in rural and mountain communities.

Across the country, the Postal Service plays an essential role in connecting communities, supporting local economies, and ensuring access to critical services. That role is especially important in rural areas, where residents often depend on USPS as their primary and sometimes only reliable connection to mail delivery, including medications, essential goods, and election materials.

However, persistent service gaps in rural communities continue to raise serious concerns. In many areas, residents experience longer delivery times, inconsistent service, and limited access to postal facilities. These challenges are often compounded by workforce shortages, delivery route constraints, transportation delays, and geographic barriers such as mountainous terrain and long travel distances between delivery points. In some communities, post offices operate with reduced hours or limited staffing, further restricting access for residents who already face fewer alternatives.

Recent oversight findings and constituent reports have highlighted that mail delivery performance in certain rural areas has fallen below national averages, with delays in both letter mail and packages. These service gaps can have real consequences for families and small businesses, but they are particularly concerning in the context of elections. When voters rely on the mail to receive and return their ballots, even modest delays can create barriers to participation, especially in communities where in-person voting options are limited or far away.

The reliability of postal delivery is directly tied to the ability of voters to participate in free and fair elections. During recent outreach in rural and mountain communities, we consistently heard concerns about delayed mail delivery, inconsistent service, and uncertainty about whether ballots would arrive and be counted on time. These concerns emphasize the need for clear and proactive planning to address known service gaps ahead of the election.

We recognize and appreciate the dedication of USPS employees who serve rural communities under challenging conditions every day. At the same time, it is essential that USPS take targeted

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and transparent steps to address longstanding disparities in service and ensure that all voters, regardless of geography, have equal access to timely and reliable mail delivery.

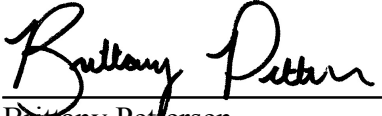
To better understand USPS's preparedness and planning efforts, we respectfully request responses to the following questions:

- What specific operational steps is USPS taking to ensure all election mail, including ballots, is delivered in a timely and reliable manner for the upcoming election?
- How does USPS define, track, and publicly report delivery performance for election mail, particularly for ballots sent to and from rural communities?
- What targeted actions are being implemented to address persistent delivery delays in rural and hard-to-reach ZIP codes, including those with known staffing or transportation challenges?
- How is USPS addressing workforce shortages, route coverage gaps, and logistical constraints that may disproportionately impact rural mail delivery?
- What protocols are in place to identify, prioritize, and expedite election mail within USPS processing and delivery systems?
- How does USPS coordinate with state and local election officials to ensure alignment on ballot mailing timelines and delivery expectations, particularly in rural jurisdictions?
- Has USPS provided updated guidance to election officials and the public regarding recommended mailing deadlines to account for potential delays in rural delivery networks?
- How does USPS handle ballots that are processed or delivered after applicable state deadlines due to postal delays, and what safeguards are in place to minimize these occurrences?
- In light of recent federal actions affecting voter records and mail-in voting processes, how will USPS ensure that ballots are delivered accurately and on time to eligible voters, including in cases where address records may be incomplete, outdated, or inconsistent?
- What were USPS's on-time delivery rates for election mail during the 2022 and 2024 election cycles, including a detailed breakdown by rural and urban areas, and what lessons learned from those cycles are being applied to current preparations?

A reliable and accessible postal system is fundamental to ensuring that all Americans, regardless of where they live, can fully participate in our democratic process. Addressing longstanding service gaps in rural communities is critical to maintaining trust in both our postal system and our elections. We appreciate your prompt attention to this matter and look forward to your detailed response.

Sincerely,

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Brittany Petersen
Member of Congress



Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



Adam Smith
Member of Congress



JM Tokuda
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



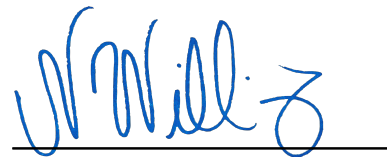
Ed Case
Member of Congress



Shri Thanedar
Member of Congress

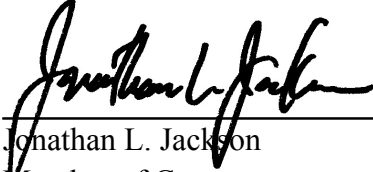


Jason Crow
Member of Congress



Nikema Williams
Member of Congress

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A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jonathan L. Jackson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath it.

Jonathan L. Jackson
Member of Congress