

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 20, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader McConnell and Leader Schumer:

We write to request that the Senate take up and pass as soon as possible the *Postal Service Emergency Assistance Act*. Our bipartisan legislation would provide emergency relief to the United States Postal Service (USPS) and help put the agency on a sustainable path toward long-term solvency. Americans are counting on the Postal Service for affordable and reliable delivery of mail and packages, including prescriptions and safety net benefits, and Congress must ensure that the USPS has the resources it needs to continue providing these needed services.

The COVID-19 public health emergency has underscored the vital role of the USPS while also posing challenges for this essential agency. The pandemic has contributed to declines in first-class and marketing mail volumes, while adding new costs, including for personal protective equipment and other safety measures. Even in light of increases in package volumes, the USPS estimates that COVID-19 will increase net losses and accelerate its cash crisis.

The bipartisan *Postal Service Emergency Assistance Act* would provide the relief needed to help stabilize the USPS and safeguard the agency's essential services for nearly 160 million households and businesses across the United States. This legislation would provide the USPS with up to \$25 billion in emergency COVID-19 funding, available until September 30, 2022. Prior to accessing these funds, the USPS would be required to certify in its quarterly and annual reports to the Postal Regulatory Commission that the funds are necessary to cover losses or expenses resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The bill also seeks to ensure that USPS can access emergency borrowing authority under the terms and conditions in place on September 29, 2018. Recognizing the need to ensure the viability of the USPS beyond the pandemic, the bill would require the Board of Governors to develop a plan to put the agency on a sustainable path toward long-term solvency.

While we favor reasonable steps to reform the USPS and will continue to advocate for measures to ensure its financial sustainability, we share concerns about the operational changes implemented by Postmaster General DeJoy in the midst of a pandemic and in the lead up to a national election. In the weeks since these changes were enacted, our offices have been contacted by numerous constituents concerned about the USPS, including constituents who experienced slower mail delivery, missing or delayed packages, and unpredictable post office hours. Similar issues have been reported in communities throughout the country. We called on the Postmaster General to reverse the operational changes and he has now suspended these changes until after the election. We also expect the Postmaster General to revisit and address any previous operational changes that are continuing to have adverse consequences on mail delivery. We plan to monitor the actions of the Postal Service closely to ensure there are no further disruptions or delays in mail

delivery and look forward to Postmaster General DeJoy's upcoming testimony before the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee.

At this critical moment as the United States struggles to overcome a devastating public health crisis and as we gear up for a national election, the need for fast and reliable mail delivery is clear. This basic and essential service must be preserved, and it is well within Congress' capacity to ensure this happens. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator