

OVERSIGHT OF THE U.S. POSTAL SERVICE

HEARING BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS SECOND SESSION

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C O N T E N T S

Hearing held on December 10, 2024	Page 1
---	-----------

WITNESSES

Mr. Louis DeJoy, Postmaster General, United States Postal Service Oral Statement	6
Ms. Tammy Hull (Minority Witness), Inspector General, United States Postal Service Oral Statement	9
<i>Opening statements and the prepared statements for the witnesses are avail- able in the U.S. House of Representatives Repository at: docs.house.gov.</i>	

INDEX OF DOCUMENTS

- * Letter, August 13, 2024, from the Georgia Delegation to the U.S. Postal Service; submitted by Rep. McCormick.
- * Letter, August 22, 2024, from the U.S. Postal Service to the Georgia Delegation; submitted by Rep. McCormick.
- * Article, *Politico*, “Deadly Delivery Highlights Falsified USPS Heat Records”; submitted by Rep. Casar.
- * Audit Report, “Measuring Performance of Sorting and Delivery Centers”, U.S. Postal Service, Office of the Inspector General; submitted by Reps. Crockett and Lee.
- * Letter, June 27, 2024, to Postmaster General DeJoy; submitted by Rep. Mfume.
- * GAO Report, U.S. Postal Service Inspection Service Should Document Its Law Enforcement Workforce Decision Making Process; submitted by Rep. Norton.
- * Article, *Government Executive*, “Fed Agencies Could Save \$6 Billion by Electrifying their Fleets”; submitted by Rep. Raskin.
- * Letter, May 11, 2022, from former Chairwoman Maloney to Postmaster General DeJoy; submitted by Rep. Raskin.
- * Report, MDP Analytics, “Critique of USPS Elasticities”; submitted by Rep. Raskin.
- * Statement for the Record, Kevin Yoder of Keep Us Posted; submitted by Rep. Raskin.
- * Statement for the Record, Marie Hobson Clarke of Envelope Manufacturer’s Association; submitted by Rep. Raskin.
- * Statement for the Record, Chuck Mulidore of the National Association of Postal Supervisors; submitted by Reps. Raskin and Connolly.

INDEX OF DOCUMENTS

- * Resolution, from APWU, September 16, 2022; submitted by Rep. Tlaib.
- * Report, U.S. Postal Service, Office of the Inspector General, Delivery Operations–Undelivered and Partially Delivered Routes; submitted by Rep. Frost.
- * Letter, August 17, 2024, from Dorchester Resident; submitted by Rep. Pressley.
- * Letter, April 10, 2024, from Roxbury Residents; submitted by Rep. Pressley.
- * Letter, May 3, 2024, from Somerville Resident; submitted by Rep. Pressley.
- * U.S. Postal Service FY 2025 Performance Targets; submitted by Rep. Raskin.
- * Questions for the Record: to Mr. DeJoy; submitted by Rep. Palmer.
- * Questions for the Record: to Mr. DeJoy; submitted by Rep. Donalds.
- * Questions for the Record: to Mr. DeJoy; submitted by Rep. Perry.
- * Questions for the Record: to Mr. DeJoy; submitted by Rep. Greene.
- * Questions for the Record: to Mr. DeJoy; submitted by Rep. Fry.
- * Questions for the Record: to Mr. DeJoy; submitted by Rep. Connolly.
- * Questions for the Record: to Ms. Hull; submitted by Rep. Perry.

The documents listed are available at: docs.house.gov.

OVERSIGHT OF THE U.S. POSTAL SERVICE

Tuesday, December 10, 2024

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY
Washington, D.C.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:04 a.m., in room HVC-210, Capitol Visitor Center, Hon. James Comer [Chairman of the Committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Comer, Foxx, Grothman, Cloud, Palmer, Higgins, Sessions, Biggs, Perry, Timmons, Burchett, Raskin, Norton, Lynch, Connolly, Krishnamoorthi, Mfume, Porter, Brown, Frost, Lee, Casar, Crockett, Goldman, Tlaib, and Pressley.

Also present: Representatives Clyde, McCormick, and Budzinski.

Chairman COMER. The hearing of the Committee on Oversight and Accountability will come to order.

I want to welcome everyone here today.

Without objection, the Chair may declare a recess at any time.

I now recognize myself for the purpose of making an opening statement.

Welcome to today's hearing of the United States Postal Service.

I want to thank you, Postmaster General DeJoy, for appearing before the Committee today. And I also want to thank Post Service Inspector General Tammy Hull for being here as well.

It has been 3 1/2 years since Postmaster General DeJoy issued the Delivering America [sic] plan and 2 1/2 years since the Postal Service Reform Act was signed into law. This law may have eased the way for the Postal Service to reform its business model, but it left the details to Mr. DeJoy.

Mr. DeJoy has withstood terrible character attacks by Democrats to include demanding he be tried for treason. I give Mr. DeJoy credit for delivering a plan to fix the Postal Service. Time and space have been provided for him to carry out this work.

The difficulty of this task has never been underestimated as it involves completely transforming the U.S. Postal Service into a modern enterprise. This transformation requires competing with some of the most innovative companies on the planet while fulfilling the universal service obligation to deliver the mail, which is a financial challenge.

And Mr. DeJoy started with an organization that had been allowed to fall into disrepair. And I do not think I need to remind anyone on the Committee about the disrepair the Postal Service was in prior to Mr. DeJoy's appointment as Postmaster General be-

cause this Committee has legislative jurisdiction over the Postal Service, and we had many hearings where former Chairman Elijah Cummings and then-Subcommittee Ranking Member Mark Meadows joined together in publicly criticizing Mr. DeJoy's predecessor for never even coming up with a plan to reform the Post Office.

However, the Postal Service's financial solvency today continues to be a major concern. The Postal Service is hemorrhaging red ink. This year's loss was almost \$10 billion. Next year's loss is projected to be \$6.5 billion. And with each loss comes an explanation of how much of it was out of your control.

Inflation caused by President Biden's out-of-control government spending is one factor, but it is not the only factor. When you predicted the Postal Service could break even, did you not foresee some of these other issues? This includes the civil service retirement obligation, which may be as much as \$14 billion.

In Mr. DeJoy's testimony, you stated, sir, how you often have been burdened with excessive oversight, to include letters from Congress. Believe me, nobody is more aware than I am of the concerns and frustration about the Postal Service from Members of Congress than me. I cannot walk down the hall without one of the 434 colleagues of mine giving me a Postal Service horror story. But it comes with the territory.

And while this Committee is charged with oversight of the Postal Service at an operational level, we are all Members representing our constituents. And the people of western Kentucky have not been immune to problems that seem to stem from efforts to change postal operation. For example, in Crittenden County, Kentucky, the Postal Service was delivering bills after they were due, and after being told the County of Crittenden was the problem, it turned out the problem lay with the Postal Service. And as the postal network changes, large amounts of mail from western Kentucky sat in Louisville before finally being sent to Nashville to be sorted.

When problems like this occur, Members are going to continue to reach out to the Postal Service, just as I did.

There are positive signs, such as increased revenue and reduced work hours, but we are eager to hear where all this is going. And there are things that Mr. DeJoy is trying to do in-house that would be better left to the private sector.

The Postal Service has added over 100,000 career employees, but personnel costs and retirement expenses are huge liabilities. This is not going to work unless we look for ways to do more with fewer people. That is what the theme of this last election and I think the theme of this new administration is going to be—how to make government more efficient.

We must also address election mail and ballot delivery. We appreciate the effort of Mr. DeJoy and your employees in delivering election mail and ballots during this year's election cycle, as you have done in every cycle since you have been Postmaster General. But the job is to get mail and packages from point A to point B, and it is not to serve as de facto election authority. And while the Postal Service gains revenue delivering election mail, it also creates an immense burden, not just in terms of resources, but also reputational risk.

This Committee, and then the House, recently passed legislation requiring barcoding on ballots, that was sponsored by Ms. Porter from California, our Democrat colleague.

This bill will add much needed, but not complete, transparency to the ballots as they travel through a portion of the postal network. But when extraordinary measures kick in, there is a gaping hole as ballots are no longer scanned regardless of whether they have a barcode.

And in California, for example, ballots can be accepted long past election day as long as they are postmarked. It leaves postal employees in the position of applying this postmark.

To me, there is too much room for bad behavior in that scenario, or the accusation of bad behavior. This issue must be closely examined moving forward, particularly in considering the patchwork quilt of election laws across the thousands of election authorities. Some of these election laws impose absurd expectations on the Postal Service. For example, allowing voters to request a ballot that comes from a printer across the country the day before the election. That is just not feasible.

In closing, we know the Postal Service has a job to do, but so do we in Congress. We need you, Mr. DeJoy, to answer our questions and give us reason to believe things will turn around at the Postal Service, which is something that I think this Committee hopes for in a bipartisan manner.

With that, I now yield to the Ranking Member for his opening statement.

Mr. RASKIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, Mr. DeJoy and Ms. Hull, for joining us here today to discuss the state of the U.S. Postal Service.

When the Continental Congress established it, it was more than just a horseback-driven system for sending personal letters. The Post Office created the communications network that made the Committees of Correspondence possible, that integrated the strategies of military commanders with public servants, and that established the national postal roads transportation network.

The Post Office also promoted the free press by ensuring the very low-cost distribution of news to the public at special rates. A luminary no less striking than Benjamin Franklin—inventor of the electric lightning rod, the lending library, the volunteer fire department, and the bifocals—became the first Postmaster General to improve delivery routes and to speed up service to connect the new Nation.

249 years later, the Postal Service is still an essential institution for Americans. Its mission is set forth in the Constitution. It is laid out in specifics in Federal code which charges the Postal Service with providing prompt, reliable, and efficient services to patrons in all areas, and shall render Postal Service to all communities.

During COVID, the Postal Service was ranked America's most essential institution. People rely on the Postal Service to transact critical business, including bank statements and legal notices, life-saving prescription medicines, and notifications of data breaches.

The Postal Service can reach every address in America—167 million residences, businesses, and PO Boxes. Its value is essential to

the economy and the society, especially to people who live in the most hard to reach rural places.

Efficiency, reliability, and stability are critical to meeting the needs of the public and required for ensuring the long-term survival and adaptability of the Post Office.

The Postal Service has been operating in an unsustainable manner for a long time. When President Trump named Postmaster DeJoy in 2020, the Postal Service was then in need of reform. In response, Postmaster DeJoy launched the 10-year Delivering for America plan. He has stated repeatedly that the Postal Service, quote, “must operate in many ways like a private business.” Of course, some private businesses succeed, and others go bankrupt.

Congress passed the bipartisan Postal Service Reform Act in 2022. This helped the Postal Service avoid imminent financial collapse and gave Postmaster DeJoy runway to implement his plan for success. The law helped the Postal Service progress toward graduating from the GAO’s high-risk list, which ranks government operations most vulnerable to waste, fraud, and abuse, and getting off that list is indeed hard to accomplish.

Despite all these bipartisan efforts, it seems that Postmaster DeJoy has failed to use all of this new discretion and resources effectively. His changes to the delivery network have resulted in a disastrous decline in on-time delivery in many regions of the country.

And we, Members of Congress, hear about it all the time from our constituents: the lost paychecks, the bills that go unpaid because they are never delivered, the business chaos, the personal disruptions. Bipartisan concerns now about DeJoy’s plan changes prompted a delay in the activation of mail processing in delivery hubs through the end of the election and holiday season.

The Postmaster General anticipated that these delays would be temporary and all in service of getting the Postal Service to break even financially. Three years into his plan, however, the financial condition of the Postal Service is astoundingly bad and much worse than all of his initial projections.

Postmaster DeJoy projected in his original Delivering for America plan that the Postal Service would reach break-even by 2023 or 2024. Instead, the Postal Service’s net loss of \$950 million from operations in Fiscal Year 2022 increased to a whopping \$9.5 billion net loss in Fiscal Year 2024. That is a 900 percent increase in the Postal Service’s losses in a 2-year time span.

Postmaster DeJoy’s Delivering for America plan changed delivery standards for first-class mail from 2-to-3 days to 3-to-5 days. Mr. DeJoy claimed the new standards would make it possible for the Postal Service to reach its 95 percent on-time mail delivery goals nationwide. Yet today, not a single one of the 50 Postal Service districts in the United States is meeting the Postal Service’s self-designed 95 percent service standard. Meanwhile, the Postal Service increased prices for mail and packages in July. Another price increase for packages will go into effect, incredibly, in January of next year.

In other words, under Mr. DeJoy’s leadership, Americans are paying higher prices for worse service. More than 3 years into Delivering for America’s implementation, with more than 150 ongoing

projects initiated to meet the Postmaster's goals, customers are still seeing a decline in mail delivery service, and they are paying higher costs for it.

The Postmaster General's plan is not working, but Mr. DeJoy continues to drive everything in the wrong direction. In the last month, the Postal Service announced its intention to lower service performance targets for Fiscal Year 2025 by as much as 15 percent among certain first-class mail products—the lowest performance targets ever, excluding the COVID-19 period.

Mr. DeJoy's leadership of the Postal Service is an alarming example of what we may see coming in the next term: sticking to the MAGA playbook of treating essential government functions with cavalier recklessness and ignoring the differences between a private sector company and the public good.

I do want to take a moment to recognize and applaud the valiant efforts of postal management and employees to deliver election mail during the 2024 election season. I also want to commend Inspector General Hull for the office's exceptional audit work during the election season to ensure the Postal Service had ample resources and insights to promptly deliver election mail and make adjustments where necessary.

When the Postal Service meets its mission, America benefits. And my colleagues and I all want the Post Office to work for our constituents and our communities. As the Postal Service works to build a resilient operation, it must fulfill its obligations to the people and ensure that we all have reliable mail delivery as a pillar of a successful American economy and society.

I look forward to today's interaction, and I yield back to you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman COMER. The Ranking Member yields back.

Today we are joined by the Honorable Louis DeJoy who has served as Postmaster General of the United States Postal Service since May 2020.

I would also like to welcome Tammy Hull, Inspector General of the United States Postal Service, Office of Inspector General, a role she has held since November 2018.

Pursuant to Committee Rule 9(g), the witnesses will please stand and raise their right hand.

Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. Let the record show that the witnesses answered in the affirmative.

And thank you all. You may take a seat.

Before we begin with opening statements, I ask unanimous consent for Representatives Clyde and McCormick of Georgia and Representative Budzinski of Illinois be waived on to the Committee for today's hearing for the purpose of asking questions.

Without objection, so ordered.

We appreciate you all being here today and look forward to your testimony. Let me remind the witnesses that we have read your written statement, and it will appear in full in the hearing record. Please limit your oral statements to 5 minutes.

As a reminder, please press the button on the microphone in front of you so that it is on and the Members can hear you. When you begin to speak, the light in front of you will turn green. After 4 minutes, the light will turn yellow. When the red light comes on, your 5 minutes have expired, and we ask that you please begin to wrap up.

I now recognize Postmaster General Louis DeJoy for his opening statement.

**STATEMENT OF MR. LOUIS DEJOY
POSTMASTER GENERAL
U.S. POSTAL SERVICE**

Mr. DEJOY. Good morning, Chairman Comer, Ranking Member Raskin, and Members of the Committee. I appreciate the opportunity to once again discuss the significant progress the U.S. Postal Service is making in accomplishing the objectives identified in the Delivering for America plan.

When I agreed to take the role of Postmaster General, the Nation was in the beginning of a pandemic, and the Postal Service was in an organizational crisis, facing a diverse array of challenges that put the organization on an accelerating and near-term trajectory to financial and service collapse.

The Postal Service had lost almost \$90 billion, was projected to lose another \$200 billion over the next 10 years, and was about to run out of cash before year end. Over 31,000 facilities were in shockingly horrible condition, with over \$20 billion in deferred maintenance and were ill-equipped for modern-day tasks.

We had not met our service standards in almost 10 years, had not reduced work hours in over 8 years despite significantly reduced volume. More explicitly, over 57 percent of our 31,000 post offices did not cover the cost of the people that worked at them, and 76 percent of our 235,000 delivery routes lost money.

This all came to a crushing blow in peak holiday season of 2020, 3 1/2 months into my tenure, when we were overwhelmed, which dramatically impacted service throughout the Nation for many months. Services scores across the board sank into the 70s for an extended period of time. We were a dysfunctional organization with poor operational processes and discipline, declining product volumes, and an alarming employment practices. We were void of strategy, vision, and resources. Yet as with today, we were high on demands, regulation, critique, and resistance to change.

Oddly enough, there was not a plan in sight at that particular point in time—anywhere from anyone to address the issues, even though it was going on for over a decade. Within 4 months of my tenure, we produced the Delivering for America plan, a plan that called for the men and women of the United States Postal Service to raise the organization up from near death and pursue operational, financial, and service excellence. And we have been executing on that plan since, through extraordinary times.

The 10-year DFA plan had five simple aspirational and directional objectives we planned to accomplish. The plan was developed in consideration of the laws and regulations that governed the Postal Service at the time, not the ones we think that should have governed it.

The plan also considered the failing condition and trajectory of the organization, as well as its revenue losses and opportunities, at the time of the release of the plan in March 2021.

Finally, the plan, when developed and as it is being implemented, considered the relevant attributes of our evolving economy, geography, public policy, marketplace, and competitive landscape as we knew it.

The plan's five objectives were focused on the following: Objective No. 1, improve our operational precision and organizational effectiveness. We have. After much reorganization and sweeping operational infrastructure initiatives, we have made great gains toward replicating, throughout the Postal Service, the ingenuity and competitive spirit of the best in private companies in America. The change in culture combined with our commitment to public service will serve us well into the future.

Objective No. 2, reducing our cost of performance. We have. Reversing our loss trajectory by reducing 45 million annual work hours, approximately \$2.5 billion, and transportation costs of over \$1.5 billion annually, thus reaching the self-held cost takeout goal of \$30 billion over the 10-year period, identified in the plan.

Objective No. 3, creating reliable and affordable service. We have. By September 2023, service for most product categories reached 93 percent on time and were well in reach of our stated goals of 95 percent. And we still had some of the lowest postage rates in the world. However, the cost to achieve this under the existing infrastructure and service standards was not sustainable.

Objective No. 4, growing our revenue with margin on our products. We have. Revenue growth has exceeded our plan by over \$24 billion, with significant gains in competitive products dramatically outpacing the projections in the DFA plan.

Objective No. 5, creating inspired, productive, and long-term career paths for our employees. We have. By reversing unfavorable practices with our pre-career work force, improving our working conditions, and liberating and inspiring the managerial work force to collaborate and simply do better.

In addition to all these initiatives and accomplishments, there was another goal of which you are aware, Mr. Chair. Under your leadership, and with former Chair Carolyn Maloney, as well as with Chairman Peters and former Ranking Member Portman in the Senate, we worked very collaboratively on the passage of the Postal Service Reform Act, which among other things, removed the unfair burden of prepayments required and enabled the integration of our retiree healthcare benefits with the Medicare system.

I again thank you and the Congress for your efforts in this important legislation.

After 3 years, we are a different organization today. We have initiated reforms in nearly every aspect of the Postal Service, including operations, maintenance, logistics, procurement, sales, marketing, technology, products, government relations, communications, and personnel management.

We have repurposed or repurposed [sic] approximately 200 facilities, deployed \$2.5 billion toward deferred maintenance, hired or repositioned almost 1 million people, relocated or installed over 1,000 conveyor systems, transitioned one of the world's largest air

cargo networks, packaged and delivered over 1 billion COVID test kits, and introduced a new multibillion dollar product.

We did all this while delivering 400 million pieces of mail daily, 6 days a week, to 167 million addresses spread across half the planet under rules, regulations, and processes designed by bureaucrats of the 1970's for a different social and economic America.

I am proud of the work we have accomplished, and I am impressed by the commitment, talent, and tenacity of our people as they work hard to make the Postal Service the best in commerce and public service for many years to come, a unique opportunity we have and as the Congress intended when they created us.

What we have not done, Mr. Chair, is break even. The planned initiatives accomplished did not overcome the rescue and recovery of our operations, the 20 percent inflation we experienced, as well as the dramatic rise in our mismanaged Federal Government retirement costs and other compensation benefits. About 90 percent of our 2023 loss of \$6.5 billion was due to the substantial, unplanned, unable-to-be-forecasted increases in our costs in these areas.

Nevertheless, under these conditions we still reduced our projected 10-year losses from approximately \$200 billion to slightly under \$80 billion. We are now taking additional aggressive actions to further reduce our operating costs by \$5 billion annually and grow our revenue an additional \$3 billion annually, as identified in my letter to the President and congressional leadership on January 10, 2024. These initiatives are in line with the requirements spelled out in the Postal Reform Act to deliver mail and packages 6 days a week to an integrated network.

This requires the continued realignment and equipping of over 31,000 facilities, the rerouting of over 50,000 truckloads a day, the effective utilization of over 200 aircraft routes a day, and inspiring and changing the operational and organizational culture of over 600,000 postal employees. I am confident in our ability to accomplish all this.

We will also require the change to our service standards and business rules to reflect the modern-day use of the Postal Service and to continue to liberate us from the reckless demands in regulation and mindset that has destroyed this organization over the past 19 years.

The American people mailed 59 billion pieces of first-class mail in 1999. Last year, they mailed less than 12 billion.

It is time for us to solve for the obvious, and that is what we propose to do with our recent filing for an advisory opinion with the Postal Service Regulatory Commission.

Since September 2023, when our service was in the 90's, the rapid changes we have had to make have not come without consequence in some areas of the Nation, and we apologize to those impacted. This is the consequence of decades of neglect and inaction. The lift we have is high, and the time we have is little. So, we will carry on with caution, but we will carry on.

Having said that, throughout the coming year, we continue to deliver more than 50 percent of the mail and packages we handle each day in advance of the current service standard. We estimate we will deliver 85 percent on the day of the service standard, and

95 percent will be delivered within 1 day of the service requirement. On average, the American public will receive their mail and packages within 2.7 days.

As you know, the basic mission of the Postal Service and our fundamental statutory obligation is to provide high quality postal services in a financially sustainable manner. Under this structure, it is my job not just to deliver the mail tomorrow but to transform the Postal Service into an organization that can provide quality postal services in a financially sustainable manner for years to come.

We are working feverishly to correct for the past; overcome the economic, political, and competitive hurdles we face today; and, yes, correct for our own missteps as we engage in this massive task.

I ask you to keep in mind that there is no way to fix service and our finances under the current regulatory business model without dramatic changes to our operations and approach.

And then I would like to remind the Committee that I was not appointed by President Trump. I was appointed by a bipartisan Board of Governors.

Thank you.

Chairman COMER. Thank you.

The Chair now recognizes Inspector General Hull.

**STATEMENT OF MS. TAMMY HULL
INSPECTOR GENERAL
U.S. POSTAL SERVICE**

Ms. HULL. Thank you.

Good morning, Chairman Comer, Ranking Member Raskin, and Members of the Committee. Thank you for inviting me to discuss our work.

I am proud of the work my office completed this year to promote accountability, integrity, and transparency in the United States Postal Service.

We conducted extensive field work around the 2024 election, from late September through the week of the election, making more than a thousand visits to processing plants and delivery units in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. We reported issues our teams found in near real time to Postal Service management, and we followed up with weekly reporting to postal executives, the Board of Governors, and to Committee staff.

Overall, the Postal Service was very responsive, and this collaboration supported a successful election cycle. We will issue a report summarizing our findings in the spring.

Beyond the election, we have continued to promote transparency and accountability through our audits of the Delivering for America plan and the Postal Service's response to mail theft.

We have also fought fraud and abuse through our investigations, finding and arresting postal employees and outsiders who collaborate to steal checks, credit cards, and use the postal network to traffic narcotics. Our data indicates that we have thousands of actionable criminal complaints for which we have insufficient resources to investigate.

To continue our critical oversight for the American public, we need a budget that keeps pace with inflation and grows when need-

ed to address serious risks. We appreciate your continued support in this area.

Next week we plan to issue a report on the early impacts of the Postal Service's transportation optimization effort that alters when collection mail is picked up at certain post offices. Our report will identify service reductions that resulted in the communities where the changes occurred. Consistent with our previous work, this report will note the critical need for increased transparency around these operational changes and their expected impacts. We believe the Postal Service needs to significantly improve communications with the affected communities so that the American public has accurate information about the changes they will experience and the service levels they should expect.

Earlier this year, we reported similar concerns in our work on the implementation of the Delivering for America plan. It is important that the Postal Service keep communities and employees informed as changes are made. This is especially important when these impacts occur in under-served rural parts of America that have limited options and rely most heavily on the Postal Service. Cost cutting to achieve break-even performance can result in disparate impacts to these communities. Accurate, timely, and transparent information about how plan changes will impact these communities is critical to preserve trust in America's Postal Service.

While these initiatives roll out, financial challenges for the Postal Service continue. Our work has identified the need for the Postal Service to provide updated financial information as it implements its plans. The Delivering for America 2.0 update did not include projections on whether or when the changes will lead to break-even results. These financial projections are essential for key decision-makers to better understand the tradeoffs the Postal Service is making, especially as it advocates for legislative changes to its pension and workers' compensation programs. Our recent work discusses how these programs are costly obligations, and it would be helpful for all stakeholders to better understand what it will take for the Postal Service to be financially solvent.

While the Postal Service has not provided updated long-term financial projections, it has provided some cost-savings estimates associated with specific parts of its plan. Our future work will provide oversight assessing whether it fully realizes these projected savings.

We at the OIG are committed to our efforts to provide transparency and promote accountability for service performance and financial solvency. America needs a strong Postal Service, and the Postal Service owes clarity to the communities it serves about its plans and their projected impacts.

I appreciate the time to discuss these issues and your support. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Chairman COMER. Thank you.

We will begin our questions. The Chair now recognizes Dr. Foxx from North Carolina.

Ms. FOXX. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to thank both of our witnesses for being here.

I think my colleagues on both sides have done a good job of expressing our concerns about the status of reforms and performance of the Post Office.

Mr. DeJoy, as you know, my district, and many areas across the Southeastern United States, were hit hard by Hurricane Helene at the end of September. The storm brought catastrophic flooding and widespread damage that did not spare postal facilities in its path.

Can you tell me how many post offices in North Carolina remain closed and how many have been reopened? And if you do not have the answer readily, it is OK if you give it to me later. And how long do you expect the closed post offices to remain closed?

Mr. DEJOY. Thank you, Congresswoman Foxx. I believe we have about 10 post offices now that still are without service. We have mobile—you know, mobile units that we have put in place.

I will tell you that when the hurricane hit, we lost about 30 post offices and were down about—not able to get to about 3 million delivery points, and subsequently progressed down to about 20,000 right now that are closed.

Ms. FOXX. Put on your mic.

Chairman COMER. In fact, we have had a couple people, and myself included, having a little trouble hearing you all. If you could pull the mics closer and speak into the microphone, that would help. Thank you.

And I am sorry to interrupt you, Dr. Foxx.

Ms. FOXX. That is OK.

I want to go on to another local issue. The Fleetwood, North Carolina, post office, very small facility in a fast-growing community, is too small for the mail volume it receives. And we understand many of the Fleetwood routes are run out of the Boone post office nearly 18 miles away, which is delaying the delivery of mail and costs mail carriers time and the UPS [sic] money.

My staff was told the Fleetwood post office could not be moved to a larger facility—although one is available—unless a disaster struck the post office. Well, it was destroyed by flooding.

Can we now expect the Fleetwood post office to be moved or rebuilt as a larger facility so that the long and wasteful transfer of mail to and from the Boone post office can be eliminated?

It has been a constant source of frustration for many of my constituents, and I am going to follow up on this, Mr. DeJoy, because I have other questions to ask you.

You stated a few years ago your goal was for the Postal Service to break even by 2023. However, as we have heard today, the USPS continues to lose money each year and is on track to close this year with a \$9.5 billion loss.

Is the Delivering for America plan still up to the task of helping the Postal Service finally break even?

Mr. DEJOY. Yes. Look, we just issued Delivering for America 2.0, which is just reinforcement of the initiatives that we have to improve operational performance, recognize the diminishing mail volumes that we are handling in the marketplace and reclaiming our position in the package business.

So, our drive to, you know, to reduce costs, grow revenue, so we can put more product into our carriers' bags, which have to go to 161 million addresses, 6 days a week, by law, OK, which is over

half our cost, which is a pretty fixed environment. So, we are pursuing these initiatives. We have introduced new products that have grown package revenue significantly and have other products coming down the line once we get the network in order and the changes in the service standards that we need.

So, absent other extraordinary issues that face us, this is the best plan that I have seen around town in a long time. We are planning—we will get \$5 billion out of additional costs, and we will grow our revenue by additional \$3 billion. And if the OIG wants to put a forecast in as to when we will break even—she has those numbers—she can do it.

Ms. FOXX. Thank you, Mr. DeJoy. You know, I use the post office a lot. I send out a lot of mail every week from my office from me personally. So, I am very acutely aware of the service, the time, and the cost.

At what point do increases in postage rates start destroying demand and decrease the volume of mail to economically unsustainable levels?

And you have said you are going to raise postage rates to the extent possible. How do you determine what constitutes, quote, “the extent possible?”

Mr. DEJOY. So, we have operated under a defective pricing model for 15 years before my time. Mail volume had cut in half. The PAEA froze prices due to inflation, and the mail volume got cut in half, and we were not allowed to raise our prices, to the tune of \$50 billion that the organization did not—was not able to raise their prices.

When I got here, we finally got the approval to raise prices, and we had 20 percent inflation, of which I get to charge prices after we incur the inflation. I am always in arrears. Eighty—75 percent of the price increases that we charge were due to inflation and were not at the inflation rate.

An organization like ours which has labor and physical distribution assets that is—would have been negligent not to do any, you know, price increases, especially after 50 years.

We are trying to reduce our costs significantly, OK, and grow our revenue to create an integrated mail and package network that winds up funding the delivery of mail into rural communities like yours. OK. That is the strategy we are working on—

Ms. FOXX. Thank you, Mr. DeJoy.

Mr. DEJOY [continuing]. Right now.

Ms. FOXX. I am way over time. I apologize, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman COMER. Thank you.

The Chair recognizes the Ranking Member.

Mr. RASKIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

So, Mr. DeJoy, your plan promised Americans excellence in delivery, but the Postal Service is now operating below its 95 percent target service standard nationwide in every single one of the 50 postal districts in America.

The service performance in my state of Maryland, for first-class mail, has remained significantly below the national average, which is 89 percent. Maryland has not met the 95 percent service standard for at least 2 years.

Given that you have not been able to meet the current target service standards, your new proposal to the Board of Governors is not to work to improve service, to bring it up to par, as I understand it, but instead to lower the service standards further, especially in rural areas.

Do I have that right? Is this your approach to dealing with this problem?

Mr. DEJOY. Well, I disagree with the premise, and it is not the approach. The approach deliver—85 percent, 90 percent of mail and packages originate within 50 miles of the sites that we are talking about for collecting and distributing originating mail. OK.

All of that service into rural communities will be advanced. OK. We are talking about single-piece, first-class mail collected from these rural areas outside of 50 miles, which is not only rural areas—there is also about half the volume is urban areas outside of 50 miles of these plants, and half the volume is in rural areas—may get a day less within the 5-day window.

Everything else will get—they will still get their medications which come in packages. They will still get their other types of mail that come from shippers of products and so forth.

Mr. RASKIN. OK. But just to be clear, it is as if somebody is getting a poor grade, and rather than trying to figure out how to improve their performance, it is changing the grading standard. Is that right?

Mr. DEJOY. I disagree with the premise. I give myself a good grade.

Mr. RASKIN. Well, I am just going by the numbers that exist. I mean, isn't it the case that in all 50 postal districts you have not lived up to the 95 percent service standard?

Mr. DEJOY. First of all, 95 percent never had a target date, right. We have never had—it is a 10-year plan, sir. It was 25 years of destruction. It is a 10-year plan. OK. Right now, as I said, 50 percent of first-class mail—of market-dominant mail gets delivered a day in advance, 85 percent on time, 95 percent within 3 days, which is better than the service was when I got here.

And we are making dramatic change. We have moved a million—

Mr. RASKIN. OK.

Mr. DEJOY [continuing]. People around the Nation. We have opened up 200 different facilities, right.

Mr. RASKIN. All right. I appreciate all of that.

Ms. Hull, let me come to you, help me figure this out. Is the Delivering for America plan actually improving timeliness and reliability of service delivery for Americans?

Ms. HULL. We have not seen that so far. This past year, there have been significant network changes in our work in—particularly in Atlanta and Richmond saw some significant service degradations when those network changes were implemented, and also in the introduction of some of the transportation optimization—local transportation optimization in Richmond and what we are seeing now in some of the other areas. Service has declined in those locations.

Mr. RASKIN. OK. Mr. DeJoy, you said the Postal Service would break even by 2023, last year, or 2024. We are in December now.

Under your leadership, the Postal Service has increased the deficit by 900 percent.

Do you still realistically expect the Postal Service to break even this year or next year, or when will it break even?

Mr. DEJOY. I expect to drive \$5 billion of costs down over the next 24 months and grow revenue \$3-to \$4 billion over the next 24 months. I intend to, you know, try and negotiate with someone on our retirement plan benefits and how they get calculated and how they get invested.

We just filed for—with OPM to look at how the—we have had like a 700 percent increase in terms of people that will be on the plan that is inaccurate. We have investment issues. We have workman's comp issues.

But these are things that take—most of them will take actions from this Congress. I cannot do this myself. But what I can do, we are doing. We are going to drive out costs, we are going to grow revenue. And this is why we did not put a forecast in for, you know, for when the break-even was, because it is not something we can do ourselves.

All agencies do not put in what they are—how they are going to use their—if they are going to break their budget or not. We put it in at that particular point in time for a variety of reasons and—but we are working to drive out costs and grow revenue.

Mr. RASKIN. So, do you regret now having set that break-even point in 2023 or 2024, when you first set this out?

Mr. DEJOY. So, there is a lot of things I regret sitting here. OK. What does—I mean, that was—I was here 3 1/2 months. I had projections. I had an understanding of what the operation was and should have been doing. Right.

I had a Board, we sat down, and we put something together that said something that had been—something that lost \$100 billion over the last 10 years, right, and was more broke than one could even imagine, OK, we put a number together and we went for it. And we got a lot done, and we are still getting a lot done.

Mr. RASKIN. OK. And can you break even without Congress' help? Are you saying you need Congress' help to do it now?

Mr. DEJOY. I think it is good. Next year I will have 600,000 people on my payroll, maybe, 610. I have 720,000 on my retirement plan. That is a problem.

Mr. RASKIN. OK. So just to be clear, you are saying you need Congress' help in order to break even?

Mr. DEJOY. I—well, I can continue to unwind service. Right? I am telling you what I can get in terms of cost. If, in fact, we get all those costs, and we have reasonable inflation, and we have reasonable calculations of our workman's comp costs, and we have reasonable calculations of our retirement benefits, we have a chance.

I have a date and time and projection, but if I say that, that becomes the whole discussion, what we did not get accomplished, not what we got accomplished. So, I am a little wiser being here in Washington for 4 years now.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman's time is expired.

The Chair recognizes Mr. Grothman from Wisconsin.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Thank you.

Always great to talk about the Postal Service. I used to collect stamps. Just to give you a little history, the last 3-cent stamp was in 1958, the Mackinac Bridge stamp. So, there you are.

Now, you said that your first-class stamps are lower than other countries. I was not aware of that. Could you give us a little story as to where the first-class stamp is today in, say, Canada or Mexico or the U.K.?

Mr. DEJOY. U.K. is about 2 bucks—2 bucks for a stamp. Paris—Europe is in the \$2 range, \$1.50.

I am sorry.

Mr. GROTHMAN. What is Canada and Mexico?

Mr. DEJOY. I do not know. I have a—I can get you a chart, but we are at the bottom—we are down with Ecuador and countries like that. Most of the industrial world is in the \$1.50-plus range.

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. Overall—well, next question. Are there any requirements with regard to electric vehicles for the Post Office?

Mr. DEJOY. There is no—we have a plan to deploy electric vehicles. We have a commitment to buy—we have a plan to buy 106,000 vehicles over the next 5 years, of which 66,000 will be electric.

This year we took in 28,000 vehicles, of which 22,000 vehicles were gas vehicles. Next year it will be about 50/50. And then the following year on the acquisitions we have, we will be—

Mr. GROTHMAN. Do you have any statistics as far as the cost of gas versus electric?

Mr. DEJOY. Well, you know, Congressman, I was in the crossfire of a whole bunch of issues and did not agree to put electric vehicles into our fleet until we had, you know, the appropriate cost benefits to the organization.

The IRA program, which was approved by this Congress, gave us \$1.9 billion for infrastructure costs and gave us \$1.2 billion for new vehicle costs, of which we have put together a plan that does, in fact, work for the Postal Service with that particular—with those particular, you know, cost structures.

We are buying, you know, special-purpose, long-term vehicles that will last us 20, 25 years, at a relatively good cost with the IRA offset, and all my infrastructure will be paid for this set of vehicles coming out.

We are studying the charges now as it moves forward. We have our routes are set up for this type of service. Some of these vehicles we do not have to charge for 3 days.

And the costs, I believe, when I look back at the cost of improvements that we get, it's only when we get out to the cost of it all—let us say a battery lasts 10 years. There is cost benefit to us on maintenance and fuel and so forth for the 10 years. It is when you go to buy that new battery using today's battery costs that it puts us over the—could put us over the return aspect.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Given your druthers, would you rather have gasoline-powered vehicles, if your sole goal was to save money?

Mr. DEJOY. So, my need was to have vehicles, like, now, like, 5 years ago, so—

Mr. GROTHMAN. Yes. Just straight up and down, if we wanted to save money in the next 10 years, would you feel better if we said it will be all gas?

Mr. DEJOY. I feel good where we are. I feel good where we are. We—I mean, we—

Mr. GROTHMAN. Well, that cannot be right. It is half of each. But which is less expensive? They cannot be identical. Maybe they are identical. I do not know.

Mr. DEJOY. Once—look, this is a time constraint. Once installed, the places that we are installing them—we could not put electric vehicles everywhere, and we could not put electric vehicles in overnight. OK. But once installed—and if you do not have—you offset the capital costs, which we have, it is a pretty decent thing. It is a nice vehicle, we have better monitoring on it, and it is, you know, lower in maintenance.

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. I will give you another question, because I am almost running out. We were talking this morning. Do you have any people in the Post Office which you would refer to as DEI professionals, people that are focused on that sort of thing, either with regard to people you hire or with regard to government contracting?

Mr. DEJOY. Congressman, this is a hardworking, focused, boots-on-the-ground organization. We, you know, we have—we have our normal—in terms of a plan, we have our diversity goals, but that is just handled by a basic H.R. department. And we are a diverse group of—diverse organization mostly focused on delivering mail and packages—

Mr. GROTHMAN. Yes. But does that—yes. Does that affect who you hire or who you promote?

Mr. DEJOY. I mean, we pay it—we pay it—you can look at my organization and look at and see what the—make your own judgment on it. But I hire and relocate people based on intensive evaluation of their performance. And I believe most of the organization, you know, does that.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Thank you.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman's time is expired.

The Chair recognizes Ms. Norton from Washington, DC.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DeJoy, I have written to the Postal Service many times in recent years about issues in the District of Columbia, including mail being stolen, burned, or otherwise destroyed, lost, or not delivered.

Recently, I asked that the Postal Service hold a community meeting with me and my constituents in Ward 5. The Postal Service waited for weeks before responding and eventually told my office it was in the so-called black period before the election and could not hold a community meeting with an elected official, even though my request was placed weeks before the blackout period started.

I then requested that the Postal Service contact the relevant stakeholders to hold the meeting without me during the blackout period. This never happened.

My office has contacted the Postal Service since the end of the blackout period and still has not received a substantive response about this meeting request.

So, Postmaster DeJoy, will you direct the Postal Service to work with my office and hold this meeting as soon as possible?

Mr. DEJOY. I will immediately look at—get into it, and most likely that will be the outcome. I need to understand what the circumstances is, but we need to do a—this is an organization that has a lot of complaints against it, and its people get somewhat averse to extensive communication, which is something that we are trying to change here.

But we have begun going out with different congressional and state and local people and trying to amass a communication process that not only resolves problems, but also teaches the people that we are engaging with the problems and reasons as to why, you know, why we are doing things, and hopefully build some equity and understanding of the problems that we face, that despite the accusations, we do a tremendous amount of communication, tremendous amount of communication.

Often, we are not clear enough in our communication or people do not like the answers to what we communicate, but I—you know, we will engage and embrace that. And I will personally look into your situation and get back to you in a couple days.

Ms. NORTON. Well, Mr. DeJoy and Ms. Hull, as you know, mail theft has exploded in recent years. Between 2019 and 2022, there was an 87 percent increase in reports of mail theft from mailboxes and a 543 percent increase in letter carrier robberies.

An audit issued this year by the Government Accountability Office stated that the number of U.S. postal inspected service investigations into serious crimes nearly doubled between 2019 and 2023, an increase driven by robberies of letter carriers.

I ask unanimous consent to enter the GAO report titled, U.S. Postal Service: Inspection Service Should Document Its Law Enforcement Workforce Decision-Making Process.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you.

In the District of Columbia, my constituents are continuing to experience mail theft, including check fraud. Postal theft endangers our hardworking postal employees and our constituents who have had money stolen and are missing important packages and mail.

Ms. Hull, what is the effect of the rise in mail theft on letter carriers' safety, health, and well-being?

Ms. HULL. Yes. I think the mail theft explosion is, as you said, very concerning and definitely has an impact and raises issues with letter carrier safety.

We also, similar to GAO—I think before the GAO report that you mentioned, we issued a report on the Postal Service's response to mail theft and are continuing to do local visits. We have done Queens, New York; we did Chicago; we have done San Francisco.

Washington, DC, may be a place where we go also to look at what the Postal Service is doing to address mail theft.

Ms. NORTON. I have introduced a bill to require the U.S. Postal Service to install security cameras at each postal facility to protect USPS employees, customers, and property.

The Postal Service retains its own law enforcement body, the U.S. Postal Inspector Service, that is tasked with investigating and preventing postal crime. For more than 50 years, postal police officers have been responsible for protecting postal employees, customers, and property.

The Postal Service employs approximately 450 uniformed officers around the country. These officers defend the Postal Service mission around the clock, 7 days a week.

It is more important now than ever that the Postal Service retain the ability to adequately investigate postal crime.

All right.

Chairman COMER. OK.

Ms. NORTON. However—

Chairman COMER. Go ahead.

Ms. NORTON. However, in 2020, soon after Mr. DeJoy became Postal General [sic], the Postal Service, and here I am quoting, declared that “postal police officers should no longer be assigned to investigate or prevent mail theft or protection of letter carriers,” end quote, except in cases when the theft or violation occurs directly on Postal Service premises.

I have co-lead on legislation to reverse this directive.

Ms. Hull, how does this—

Chairman COMER. I am sorry. I am going to have to—it is 2 1/2 minutes over, but we can submit that question about the police officer to the Inspector General if that is OK.

Is that OK, Mr.—

Mr. RASKIN. I agree.

Chairman COMER. OK. We will do that, Ms. Norton, if that is OK with you.

All right. Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Mr. Burchett from Tennessee.

Mr. BURCHETT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DeJoy, how many unions do you deal with within the Postal Service?

Mr. DEJOY. Directly, seven unions and management associations.

Mr. BURCHETT. Seven. All right. And tell me, what is the Delivering for America program?

Mr. DEJOY. What is it?

Mr. BURCHETT. Yes, sir.

Mr. DEJOY. The Delivering for America program is a set of strategies to try and reverse the trajectory that the Postal Service had when I arrived and bring it—improve service and improve its profitability.

Mr. BURCHETT. OK. On your website it says it is an organization in financial and operational crisis to one that is a high-performing group.

Do you believe that the plan which was introduced 4 years ago has made the Postal Service high performing?

Mr. DEJOY. I think, sir, after 20 years of crises, it takes a little bit of time to stabilize the organization, but I believe that this organization now is heading in that direction. And I know I have experience in running and competing with excellent organizations.

Mr. BURCHETT. Well, here in Fiscal Year 1924, you lost \$9.5 billion.

Mr. DEJOY. That is right. I have lots of rules.

Mr. BURCHETT. Do what?

Mr. DEJOY. I have lots of rules.

Mr. BURCHETT. OK. But that is \$9.5 billion, though, that was lost. I think that was dramatically higher than the loss in Fiscal

Year 1923, which was just—I say “just” but I am from Tennessee—that “just” is not justified because that is a heck of a lot of money to our folks. Fiscal year 2023 was \$6.5 billion.

How do you explain the increase if this is Delivering for America?

Mr. DEJOY. I have fixed prices. I have fixed service requirements—

Mr. BURCHETT. Define to me what a fixed crisis is.

Mr. DEJOY. Price, fixed prices.

Mr. BURCHETT. Price? OK. OK. I have got—

Mr. DEJOY. I had 20 percent—

Mr. BURCHETT. I have got hearing aids, and I have trouble hearing. My wife says it is selective, but now I have no excuse. And she is right, I do not.

Mr. DEJOY. We have 20 percent inflation, and we spent a lot of money trying to get service where it needed to be, and that is something that we have, you know, because of our—not getting some of the reforms that we wanted, and the inflation, we have had to, you know, take a different, you know, a different approach now.

Mr. BURCHETT. When do you think the American taxpayer will see a return on the 5-year delivering for America program?

Mr. DEJOY. Well—

Mr. BURCHETT. And do you think we will ever break even? Let us just be honest.

Mr. DEJOY. Listen, I am working at this with a whole bunch of people pretty hard with that aspiration. But I came in \$100 billion into a \$300 billion losing trajectory.

Mr. BURCHETT. Right. Look, I love the post office. Before I got to Congress, I was very active in the eBay trade. If you left a truck parked in front of my house very long, parts were probably coming off and getting sold on eBay, but are the rules and regulations included in your program tailored to enable the post office to keep up with the private sector?

Mr. DEJOY. No. We have a postal regulatory commission. We have some very, very specific—you know, my—how I move my freight and my mail and packages can all be tied to the pickup time and the collection box 30 miles outside of Roanoke, Virginia. OK? There is all sorts of, you know, different rules and long-standing practices and business processes that need to be—that need to be changed, and we are, in fact—you know, we are, in fact, changing them.

Mr. BURCHETT. OK. Let me cut into that. In my district, the Maryville office, I felt like they needed a significant overhaul. They keep getting stuck with temporary postmasters and after temporary postmasters. Could you commit to my folks in east Tennessee that we can improve this situation? Because—and I get it, it is the daggum Federal Government. People get moved upstairs when they ought to be kicked out, and I think that is part of the problem, but if you would commit to that.

Mr. DEJOY. What post—where is it, sir?

Mr. BURCHETT. Maryville. It is pronounced Maryville if you are from there. But you would pronounce it Maryville, m-a-r-y-v-i-l-l-e. It is in Blunt County. Next right up to the Smoky Mountains.

Mr. DEJOY. I get made fun of in the Senate when I speak.

Mr. BURCHETT. Well, east Tennessee is the only place in America where people do not speak with an accent, sir. I appreciate it.

And I would like to say for the record, Mr. Speaker [sic], our brother Connolly is back. The Lord does answer prayers, and I prayed for you, as many people did, and I am glad you are back with us, brother. All kidding aside.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you.

Chairman COMER. The Chair now recognizes Mr. Lynch from Massachusetts.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you. Welcome, Postmaster General DeJoy. First of all, I want to thank you for coming up to Boston and looking at the potential of relocating the general mail facility there. I got a sense of how hard you are working at some of these things, so I want thank you for that.

Inspector General Hull, thank you as well for attending. Just to go back to the vehicle situation at the post office—so, according to the Inspector General's office, the post office has about 230,000 vehicles. I think you are second only to the Department of Defense. Is that right?

Mr. DEJOY. I do not know what the Department of Defense has, but we are up to 230,000 vehicles.

Mr. LYNCH. Yes. OK. Fair enough. And the last time we looked at this issue, we had almost a quarter of those vehicles had exceeded their life expectancy of 24 years. Is that your guess on that?

Mr. DEJOY. Life expectancy was 20, and they are all—when I get done with 100,000 vehicles in 4 years, I will still have 100,000 vehicles outside their useful life.

Mr. LYNCH. Right. It is pretty bad. I did have a chance to see a demonstration of the new electric vehicle. The carriers love it. You know, the letter carriers love it. The package delivery folks, you know, rave about it. It has got a side thing where it is a lot safer, they can deliver from.

They can actually take the packages out from the sidewalk, so it is getting pretty good reviews from the people who use it, not to mention it actually has seat belts and it has air conditioning, which none of the vehicles, none of those 230,000 vehicles, believe it or not, had air conditioning, which, you know, I can only imagine how it is down south trying to deliver mail in those older vehicles. So, really pleased with the progress that you have made there.

I know that we were able to give the post office about \$3 billion in the Inflation Reduction Act. What is that going to buy us in this current, you know, transaction in terms of—I know Oshkosh is producing some of these vehicles. Is that right?

Mr. DEJOY. So—

Mr. LYNCH. These are U.S. produced vehicles, right?

Mr. DEJOY. U.S. produced vehicles.

Mr. LYNCH. Yes. OK.

Mr. DEJOY. We had \$1.9 billion for infrastructure, which means buying charging stations, going out, implementing charging stations in our new sorting and delivery centers right now, and, you know, deploying vehicles there. We got \$1.2 billion to use, and I—to use as an offset to the increase in the electric vehicle price versus a standard vehicle that we would have bought.

If an electric vehicle costs 75—approximately \$75,000 and a base vehicle would have cost \$55,000, we applied a \$20,000 to that, and that kept us in—I did not wait—there was a lot of discussion on that to keep us—we had to get the vehicles to go in where we had already existing amperage, which is where we went to our sorting and delivery centers. We needed a pretty deliberate, you know, plan in terms of implementation, and so forth, so that is working good. We also bought 10,000 Ford E-transits which we are trying to get deployed. They are left-hand drive, so when all of this is over, the next five, 6 years, so there is imbalances in terms of what we are doing, but we are getting them deployed.

Mr. LYNCH. OK. The other thing I wanted to ask you about was informed delivery. So, you get an app on—the post office offers a—this is a rollout, so it is not going completely smoothly, but you have got an app here where you can actually look at your mail before it arrives, when it comes into the general mail facility, and it is not—it is not completely available to everybody right now, and I am a little concerned about that. Some addresses are not eligible.

But when you think about it, you have got 100—close to 170 million addresses and delivery points. Why can we not turn this into a revenue stream for the post office? If everybody is going to be looking, you know, potentially, you roll this out, everybody is looking at what is coming in their mail, you know, other companies will want to piggyback on that to advertise when somebody is buying, you know, say a gardening product, or something like that, there is—if other producers are trying to, you know, sell their products into that same market, it—this is what Amazon is doing basically.

Mr. DEJOY. One-hundred percent. When I came here, we had about 30 million people on the servers. I pushed and worked with the team and we are up to almost 60 million. Now, you need other things to make it work. We need a good delivery system. We need a good information system. We are redoing our whole tracking and tracing and inform system. We used it during the COVID test kit distribution, going to areas and give messaging about ordering, and we had a click through percentage on that when we sent—if somebody signs up for informed delivery, we send an email. They open that email. It is a very, very high rate.

That is how—and the click through rate was probably like five percent, which is big in terms of marketing. This is the whole—we need to use that, and we are building that out to inspire a delivery, and I think we get this program set up right and make the fixes that we need to make and how we move mail and packages together in an integrated manner from five networks we had when I got here down to one, OK, things will be delivered and collected from residences that we are not even imagining right now. People will use this. And that system will be part of it.

Mr. LYNCH. Yes. All these other Members are talking about a revenue problem. We have a revenue problem here, so I am just saying this has huge potential if we could focus on it. Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. Before I recognize Mr. Sessions, I recognize the Ranking Member for a unanimous consent.

Mr. RASKIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Apropos Mr. Lynch's comments, I ask unanimous consent to enter into the record an article from *Government Executive*, dated June 1, 2023, titled "Federal Agencies Could Save \$6 Billion by Electrifying their Fleets."

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

The Chair now recognizes Mr. Sessions from Texas for 5 minutes.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

Postmaster General, welcome. I heard your comments. They were well written. I think they were true. I do not think that you would say that things went smoothly, but you did acknowledge that they were on a plan. You did acknowledge a lot of things that I believe are frailties that are being worked on.

As you know, I engaged the Postal Service down in Texas outside of Houston about major problems of delivery. That happened and we got over it. Are there any more things like that, that you foresee in the coming year as other people will be coming online with this new system, or what do you think there?

Mr. DEJOY. Just—I thank you for those comments and for your patience while we went through Houston, which was—opening in south Houston, which was—sir, the plan—the projects and facilities that we are deploying are not revolutionary.

Mr. SESSIONS. They were a learning process for you. I am simply—this is not being mean. I am simply—

Mr. DEJOY. No. No.

Mr. SESSIONS. Do you anticipate rolling that program out or have you learned enough from—

Mr. DEJOY. We have already rolled out 11 sites with less consequence. We had Georgia, Richmond, and this Houston one. We have 11 other sites that are going. I am processing 1.7 million packages in Indianapolis right now.

Mr. SESSIONS. Well, I do not know what else is in your basket that you intend to do here. All I am simply saying is do you have any—

Mr. DEJOY. I think we have significant mitigations in place right now to not—to—first of all, we have to absorb the capacity we deployed. The team is much more experienced in being deployed. The staffing is much more stabilized. And I think we will not be without error, but I do not plan to shut down cities.

Mr. SESSIONS. Good. My conversation with you that you've already begun is the process of emailing people about this delivery. I think that that is exceptional. I think it will work. As you know, there are lots of growth areas across the country where the changes in the program, that started years ago but nobody applied, about moving to cluster boxes from mailboxes, I think that that could be utilized very well to let people know they had mail somewhere.

I would like to turn this conversation now to a conversation that is relatively new, and that is of a term called DOGE. I am one of the three co-chairmen of the DOGE caucus that is here, and essentially we are interested in efficiencies, yes, efficiencies mostly, but on the other side of that is saving money. It would be my request to you that the post office find perhaps a better way to deal with those that would wish to deal with you on this concept of moving the post office during this period of time when there will be lots

of conversation about this and other matters of government efficiency.

I have found in the past, not to be critical, that the post office does not always place its highest priority off saving money. I know you are busy, but I have had several conversations where we have referred potential savings, and I am not sure that we heard an answer back, so you are going to get ready to see these things come publicly, and I just think it would be good for you to establish with me or—because I am generally your point of contact, a way that we can specifically look at efficiency to hear your ideas and you hear ours to save money on your side and also from us.

Mr. DEJOY. I am happy to engage in any discussion.

Mr. SESSIONS. Well, just—Peter knows, your staff knows, that we sent these things to you, and they went down in your organization. I have yet to hear things back. I want to thank you for your time. I will be quite blunt. If we had your reconfirmation up today, I would vote yes for you and your team.

Mr. DEJOY. Thank you, sir.

Mr. SESSIONS. Thank you very much.

Chairman COMER. The Chair now recognizes Mr. Connolly from Virginia.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and welcome to our two witnesses. And let me begin by saying to the Postmaster General, I have been a critic, but I have to say I am persuaded in your tenure and in your testimony today that you are certainly committed to the Postal Service and in making it viable. We are not going to agree on a lot and I am going to remain critical, but my hat is off to your commitment, and I thank you for that.

Mr. DEJOY. Thank you, sir.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Ms. Hull, the Postmaster General has got a 10-year plan called delivering for America. Is that correct? And please speak directly into the microphone so we can hear you.

Ms. HULL. Yes, that is correct.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Louder.

Ms. HULL. Yes, that is correct.

Mr. CONNOLLY. OK. And did that plan include either a break-even financial position by the end of it or even a slight profit?

Ms. HULL. So, the initial plan did. They—the Postal Service just released 2.0 the updated version of the plan, and the updated version did not include that information.

Mr. CONNOLLY. So, we had one in 1.0 but not in 2.0. Correct?

Ms. HULL. Correct.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Is that correct?

Ms. HULL. Correct, yes.

Mr. CONNOLLY. And why was that? Why would we drop a financial projection of either a slight profit or a break-even and be silent about it apparently?

Ms. HULL. I am not sure about that. I assume there were uncertainties, but that would be a good question for—

Mr. CONNOLLY. Could it possibly be because the plan, in fact, is not working?

Ms. HULL. That would be a great question for Mr. DeJoy.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Well, how many rate increases have there been in the last 2 years in the Postal Service?

Ms. HULL. I do not know the answer that question? There have been several rate increases.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. DeJoy, do you know the answer to that question? How many rate increases have we experienced?

Mr. DEJOY. I think six or seven.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Six or seven. And what—normally the postal regulatory commission, as I understand it, might approve one, but six or seven would be a little bit out of the norm, would it not? I mean, you made the point that we are below industrial countries average, and that is a good point, but as you know, that is not how consumers experience it. They experience it whether they are businesses, package deliverers, or individual homes—they experience it as inflationary relative to what they were paying previously. And six or seven rate increases is a lot.

Ms. Hull, the Postmaster General noted that—as did the Ranking Member, that we are going to lose \$9.5 billion projected this year. Is that correct?

Ms. HULL. Yes.

Mr. CONNOLLY. And it was \$6.5 billion last year. Is that correct?

Ms. HULL. Yes.

Mr. CONNOLLY. That is a big increase. When you are losing \$9.5 billion in the midst of a 10-year plan, isn't it a little difficult to say success?

Ms. HULL. I think financially there have been some serious challenges, and that is why we are pushing for an increased transparency into the finances of the Postal Service so that those targets and the tradeoffs can be greater.

Mr. CONNOLLY. What do you mean by transparency? For example, would one of the elements of transparency be tell us when you think we are going to break even or have a small profit?

Ms. HULL. Just give some financial projections overall, right, on the results of the plan.

Mr. CONNOLLY. And that is kind of where I am going. Were those projections included in DFA 2.0?

Ms. HULL. No. No, they were not.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Why not?

Ms. HULL. No. I—

Mr. CONNOLLY. I am asking you as the Inspector General, did you inquire as to why that was missing? That seems kind of important to me in any financial plan.

Ms. HULL. Right. Yes. When we issued our report on the Delivering for America plan, it was prior to the 2.0 being released, and so one of the recommendations that we made was that the financial projections that were in 1.0 were not really relevant anymore. So many things had changed, and so it was really important for the Postal Service to release updated financial projections. That recommendation, I think, is due to be closing end of this year or early next, and so we did make a recommendation to that effect in that report.

Mr. CONNOLLY. It seems to me that has got to be an important part of any plan if it is going to generate confidence both in the consuming public and here in Congress. I thank you both for being here today, and I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. The Chair recognizes Mr. Palmer from Alabama.

Mr. PALMER. I am going to deviate a little bit from the questions that have been asked, Mr. DeJoy. I have got a constituent who reached out. And I am sure other Members of Congress have constituents that raise concerns about the post office, but his concern is about the current poor conditions of one of the post offices in my district, the Meadowbrook Post Office. For 3 1/2 years, he has tried to call the postal inspectors to discuss this and has not heard back. Is it normal procedure that the postal inspectors do not return calls from—

Mr. DEJOY. Not that I am aware of. We know they sometimes do not give good information or might have been referred to a facilities group, but inspectors usually respond.

Mr. PALMER. He has raised specific concerns about the disposal of waste and trash that is accumulating in the parking areas. I do not know the age of this individual, but for—I have gotten concerns raised by—for another post office by some of my constituents who are older, elderly, about access to their post office boxes. They have, in this one particular case, the boxes are outside, but in this particular post office case, he says there is just regular trash, old furniture is on the property. There is a hole in front and a backflow from waters. Just indicative of a lack of maintenance of the facility, and this guy says that he has been calling for 3 1/2 years and had not heard back. That is a—I hope he was not on hold.

Mr. DEJOY. We have 31,000 facilities, all in disrepair. I put \$2.5 billion in over the last 3 years. If you give me this location, I will check on it.

Mr. PALMER. I will have my staff reach out to you on that.

Let me ask you another question. I have got some concerns, and I do not—for individuals, they can buy whatever vehicle they want to, but the post office under the Green New Deal is moving rapidly into EVs. What is the cost differential between a gas-powered vehicle and an electric vehicle?

Mr. DEJOY. To buy the vehicle?

Mr. PALMER. Yes. To buy the vehicle.

Mr. DEJOY. For the vehicles that we need in terms of special purpose vehicle, I would say—that we are getting built, it is about \$20,000. Coming on—off-the-shelf vehicles, maybe \$10,000 dollars.

Mr. PALMER. For an electric vehicle?

Mr. DEJOY. Yes.

Mr. PALMER. I will need to check on that. I am concerned about this, because I am looking at the minimum range. It is 25 miles. I am not sure—between charges. That is what I saw.

Mr. DEJOY. It is about 70, but our average use is coming in around 25 miles, so we are looking at ways now to expand a ratio between the vehicles and chargers, because we are in close proximity—you know, our average route is short, 20 miles, 15 miles, 10 miles in some cases.

Mr. PALMER. It is my understanding, though, that this transition is going to be fairly expensive, and obviously, we all have concerns about the physical condition of the post office and—

Mr. DEJOY. So, what I would say is, Congress gave us \$3 billion and we are using it wisely, and I think in my—I would not have

done it unless we thought it was financially, you know, viable and good for the service. We needed vehicles. This was the way we were able to move forward. And I think we worked a good strategy of, you know, with regard to this.

Mr. PALMER. We will see how it works out, but I have feeling, Mr. Chairman, we will be discussing this again. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. Would you yield your last 40 seconds, if you do not mind?

Mr. PALMER. I would be happy to.

Chairman COMER. Mr. DeJoy, there have been reports about, you know, the new administration clawing back unspent COVID funds, and things like that. Where are we with the funds that were allocated in the postal reform bill that passed this Committee in a bipartisan way? And then there were two pots of money I am curious about. The pot with the postal reform bill and the pot where it had the money and infrastructure bill for the electric vehicles. Where are we on that?

Mr. DEJOY. So, this was done with the electric vehicles. That was legislation that was passed.

Chairman COMER. Infrastructure?

Mr. DEJOY. Given to us. We have that money. We have made commitments against that money to buy vehicles and to—

Chairman COMER. What percent have you spent? I know you cannot spend it all at once, because they do not make enough electric vehicles.

Mr. DEJOY. I would say we are—so there is commitment in terms of planned commitment. That is all spent because that is—and then there is commitment in terms of contract commitment.

Chairman COMER. There you go.

Mr. DEJOY. Some percentage—I would have to get back to you.

Chairman COMER. Let us know that.

Mr. DEJOY. With regard to the other one, I would like to—the postal reform adjustment that was made, there was no cash in that. That was strictly the reversal of the pre-funding—

Chairman COMER. Right. OK.

Mr. DeJoy—of the thing that—

Chairman COMER. Very good point.

Mr. DEJOY. Alright?

Chairman COMER. OK.

The Chair recognizes Mr. Krishnamoorthi from Illinois.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Mr. DeJoy, for your service. Mr. DeJoy, service standards have unfortunately been going down during your tenure. According to your own performance report for this quarter, I am holding this up, it says national single piece first-class mail, 2-day performance was 85.9 percent on time, which is a 4.9 point decrease over the same period last year. That is what this quarterly report says, right?

Mr. DEJOY. I do not remember exactly, but if you say so, yes.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI. Yes, sir. And the price of a stamp was 55 cents in 2020, right?

Mr. DEJOY. Yep.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI. And the price of a stamp today is 73 cents, correct?

Mr. DEJOY. Correct.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. OK. So, we have seen now six increases during your time in office, and what bothers me, and what some other people have pointed out, is not only has the price of stamps gone up so much, you know, these forever stamps have now gone up six times during your tenure. That is 46 percent during a time when you say that inflation has gone up 20 percent. Something else has gone up, and that is your compensation, sir. Your total compensation was almost \$481,000 in your first full year of pay in 2021, and your total compensation in 2024 is \$561,000 all in. A 17-percent increase. Isn't that right?

Mr. DEJOY. I have no idea.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. It is right here in your compensation table and your USPS report.

Mr. DEJOY. You can study it. You pay more attention to it than I do.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. I doubt that, but let us take a look at this.

Mr. DEJOY. I promise you.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. During your tenure, sir, you have earned—you have received over \$2.1 million in compensation. \$2.1 million in compensation just during your tenure. So, what bothers me is this: During your tenure, service standards have gone down. Affordability of mail has gone down. Your compensation has gone way, way, way up, and that is deeply, deeply troubling.

Let me turn your attention to another issue which my constituents bring this up to me all the time. Mr. DeJoy, when the mail is not delivered for whatever reason, you are aware that letter carriers are required to complete, quote, "undelivered mail report," correct?

Mr. DEJOY. Yes.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Let me show you some of the undelivered mail reports that have come to our attention. This first one says, "instructed to leave mail behind." Isn't that what it says?

Mr. DEJOY. I cannot see that far.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Would you like us to—

Mr. DEJOY. I will take your word for it. I will take your word for it.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. OK. Let me show you another undelivered mail report. The report says, "instructed to leave mail, hundreds of flats." That is what this report says, right?

Mr. DEJOY. If you say so. I agree.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Let me show you another undelivered mail report—"instructed to leave mail behind by management." And then let me show you a fourth undelivered mail report that came to our attention. Do you see this? At the very bottom it says, quote, "delivering for America," exclamation point, question mark, "laughable." Isn't that what it is saying?

Mr. DEJOY. That is what you are saying, so I will take your word for it.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Let me show you some images and pictures that came to us, which is highly unusual. We never receive these things, but we received it recently. This is what election week looked like in Des Plaines, Illinois' post office with mail that was left behind. Election week. That is a mess.

Let us show you another picture. Palatine, Illinois. This is in my district. Parcels piled on high. This is a complete mess and completely unacceptable. This is not delivering for America.

Mr. DEJOY. You think this is just new to my tenure, sir?

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. This is leaving mail behind for America.

Mr. DEJOY. You think this is just new to my tenure, sir? You think this did not exist before I got here?

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. This is during your tenure, sir. Let me ask you a last—about a last topic. Are you familiar with—have you walked the halls of Cannon where they show the pieces of art from the high school art competition?

Mr. DEJOY. No.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. OK. When you walk the hall from—it is called the Cannon tunnel. There are pieces of artwork that are hung there. All of us pick, through the high school art competition, a winner and display their artwork for everyone to see. It is one of our biggest sources of pride, for me at least, and I suspect for a lot of my colleagues. Recently we had a winner declared in my district, and my district office took the art and sent it by priority mail through the U.S. mail, and it was lost in the mail. It was lost in the mail, sir.

It was one of the most challenging conversations we have ever had with a constituent. A young teenager who worked her heart out creating a piece of art, and we had to tell her we are so sorry, the USPS lost your art in the mail. Sir, this is just one story out of numerous stories in my district of people losing mail or having their mail delayed. That includes medications. That includes social security bills. That includes small business payments.

Service standards keep going down, sir. Unfortunately, the forever stamps, the cost of them keep going up forever. And the losses and the salaries and compensation are piling up. When you say in this report Delivering for America is working, I respectfully submit you are oblivious to public opinion. Delivering America [sic] is not working, and it needs to be returned to sender. Thank you, sir.

Mr. DEJOY. What would be the alternative you would offer right now?

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. May I answer the question?

Chairman COMER. Sure.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. I think you have got to live up to the service standards that the American public expects of you. Those are the service standards that you publish, that you keep lowering on this piece of paper here. This is a joke. It says here pre-sort overnight delivery of first-class flats. The standard is 95 percent on time for 2024. This here, it is gone to 80 percent. That is ridiculous. That is not overnight mail anymore. That is kind of overnight. It might be a two-night. It might be a three-night.

Mr. DEJOY. That is not pre-sort. Those standards would not—that is not an accurate comparison. Pre-sort mail is not at 80 percent.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. It is right here.

Mr. DEJOY. Well, I do not know what you got there. Maybe I take back everything I said I agreed to.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. First-class flats, overnight, 95 percent is the target on-time delivery for Fiscal Year 2024. Do you not agree with that? Do you disagree with that?

Mr. DEJOY. I do not remember, so I will say OK.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. OK. This is your enclosure from this latest report, Fiscal Year 1925 market dominant performance targets, first-class mail.

Chairman COMER. I am going to let you all iron this out like we did with Ms. Norton. I gave you 2 1/2 more minutes.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Hold on. Let me just finish my sentence. This says first-class flats overnight, target percentage Fiscal Year 2025, 80 percent.

Chairman COMER. All right. And we can—you can submit additional record—additional questions at the conclusion.

The Chair recognizes Mr. Perry from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, ma'am, sir. I will give you an action item. I know that you got a lot of places, but I got a call from one of my bosses yesterday. He went to the Derry Street in Harrisburg Post Office to buy a roll of stamps, 100 stamps, and he was told we do not have any. Now, that is one of the money making I think portions of your business, I think we can agree. Is that something that is endemic? Is that something that—is that associated with personnel issues? Or are you not able to produce them enough, or is that just a one off? What do you know about—

Mr. DEJOY. I have not heard that before.

Mr. PERRY. You have or have not?

Mr. DEJOY. I have not. So, I will look into it.

Mr. PERRY. OK. Please check for me. I want to talk to you, I know there has been a lot made of this EV purchase, and according to, I think, the postal museum, your current costs for a traditional—what I will call traditional vehicle is \$11,651 and the cost for the electric vehicle is \$59,000, so that is a \$47,000 increase or it is 66,000 vehicles, \$125 million. Now, this might—this is probably your opportunity to tell us—

Mr. DEJOY. That was the cost in 1987 when we bought them.

Mr. PERRY. What is that?

Mr. DEJOY. That was the cost in 1987 when we bought the LLVs.

Mr. PERRY. OK. So, that is what the museum says, right? So, I will take your word for it, right? And I am sure it is—since 1987 it has gone up. I do not—my bigger question is this, and this might be your opportunity to be critical of this place, of Congress. I think you stated that the subsidy from the IRA is what makes the cost of the EV—it makes it worth the effort charging, et cetera, making the change, the additional cost, and so on and so forth. Is that—can you quantify that? What is the subsidy, if you will, provided for each vehicle that the post office procures?

Mr. DEJOY. As a—I think once in place in our particular route system on—you know, we have 300—

Mr. PERRY. Sir, I get that you have kind of done the numbers, but that portends to me you that know the numbers. So, what is the subsidy? You have done—look, this has been your business even when you were in the private sector to a certain extent, right? So, do you have a number? What does that look like? Because with

all due respect, I guess, you know, to a certain extent, Congress is either mandating or incentivizing the purchase, but the American people are paying for it, whether they buy stamps or whether they pay their taxes, so I am trying to discern what that cost is.

Mr. DEJOY. You gave us money to—for us to pursue a certain initiative. We needed vehicles, right? So, we had \$1.9 billion. I purchased enough vehicles to deploy an infrastructure of \$1.9 billion. OK? Then I had \$1.2 billion to offset—to offset—for vehicles. I used \$1.2 billion to neutralize the increase from electric—from gas vehicles on the purchase price to electric vehicles. That is more or less—

Mr. PERRY. Sir, I get the point. Look, I did not run the numbers. I suppose we can. Maybe Ms. Hull can at some point. What I am trying—when you say we gave you, yes, the U.S. Congress, the U.S. Government took money away from the American people who are also—and I am not saying this is your fault, but they are buying—they are paying for the post office when they buy stamps and buy service for delivery, so on and so forth, but now they are also paying for this transition, and I am trying to evaluate—I am trying to get you to help me evaluate the worthiness, the additional cost. What is that additional cost per vehicle?

Mr. DEJOY. If the Congress wanted us to pursue electrification of our fleet—

Mr. PERRY. Say that first part again.

Mr. DEJOY. If the Congress wanted us to pursue electrification of our fleet, which is why they gave us—

Mr. PERRY. So, let me ask you this then.

Mr. DEJOY. We used the money—

Mr. PERRY. Let me ask the question a different way. If Congress had not provided the incentive or the mandate or the requirement, or whatever you want to call it, would you, as a business manager, have pursued this effort on your own? Would the payback be there? Would the financial—would the numbers support the decision?

Mr. DEJOY. I would not have pursued it as aggressively and deliberately as we had.

Mr. PERRY. OK. Fair enough.

Mr. DEJOY. With the vehicles, we had 10 percent in electric vehicles.

Mr. PERRY. Let me ask you this question, because I am running out of time here. I think you said at the Senate hearing that 80 percent of your cost is labor. Does that strike—does that seem right?

Mr. DEJOY. Seventy-five to 80 percent.

Mr. PERRY. Seventy-five to 80 percent. So, I do not know what your business model—and I say yours—the post office's business model has lost in revenue over the past, like, 40 years. It is probably pretty high. Probably above 50 percent, right?

Mr. DEJOY. Uh-huh.

Mr. PERRY. So, you as a former private sector delivery guy, would you, in a business that is losing money at that level, then transition your contract employees to full-time employees with the additional benefits and costs? Would that be something that you would do as a private business?

Mr. DEJOY. Well, I did it in the circumstances that I was in. I had——

Mr. PERRY. You did it now, sir, or you did it then?

Mr. DEJOY. Well, I would make the business decisions that I need to make looking at all the elements of the situation that I am in, and that is what, in fact, I did. I did not just put 100,000 people on the payroll. I have 20,000 people less than when I walked in the door. I am burning 45 million hours less than when we got here.

Mr. PERRY. I understand you have——

Mr. DEJOY. I had to hire 200,000 people.

Mr. PERRY. With all the benefits and the associated costs and that is the point, sir.

Mr. DEJOY. What is that?

Mr. PERRY. I understand you are trying to manage this, but I do not think in any other industry—look, I ran a business, too. When I was hemorrhaging money is not the time I went out and hired people because I could not afford to pay them. With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield.

Mr. DEJOY. I came here during the pandemic. I need to deliver mail to 167 million addresses. I could not hire people. I compete with Amazon, UPS, and FedEx.

Mr. PERRY. And some of that problem probably resides here.

Mr. DEJOY. All of it does. It does not reside with me. The place was a mess when I got here.

Mr. PERRY. Sir, if you could enumerate what could be done differently here to help you, that would be helpful to us. I yield.

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes Ms. Brown of Ohio.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I truly thank the Postmaster General for being here today. The Postal Service is critical to the well-being of economic success and peace of mind for people across America. Congress took historic bipartisan action to reform and improve the Postal Service in the 117th Congress, yet the USPS is still lagging with underperforming response times, funding gaps, and delayed upgrades. As it has been repeatedly stated according to the postal service's own data, the on-time delivery rate in some areas in my district is barely hitting 70 percent. These are historically low service standards and far below the expected and promised rate of 95 percent, and I think we can all agree that this is unacceptable.

And as we all know, poor performance disproportionately impacts low-income communities, which is also alarming. As you know, the holiday season is referred to as peak season. The surge in mail, cards, and packages for people across the country make for an understandably busy time for the USPS, but also a predictable one. So, last month the Office of Inspector General issued an audit report identifying potential risks and evaluating the Postal Service preparedness for this year's peak season.

And 2024 might be the biggest year ever for holiday mail deliveries. Black Friday had its biggest online year on record, and all those packages and products are now making their way through the mail system. This, of course, complicates efforts to deliver the everyday mail people rely on for their health and economic security.

These critical and life-saving deliveries do not stop during the winter months. In fact, they are more vital than ever. So, Postmaster DeJoy, how are you balancing the holiday day surge with routine essential deliveries?

Mr. DEJOY. Thank you for your question, Congresswoman. We have added a significant amount of processing capability around the country with conveyor systems and new plant openings, you know, throughout the Nation. We also have redefined our transportation methodologies and practices adding significant carrier base across the Nation, and we have also done this with trying—because of our stabilization efforts within our staffing, we did not have to add—we were adding 50,000 people a season when I got here. We added about 7,000 this year. So, we are moving. We are moving product throughout the country in a line.

My position on the service standards are they are not—the service standards are measurement practices and service standards are ludicrous and we are getting them changed. This is why we filed something. But 50 percent of the mail and packages will be delivered a day in advance in the set standard, 85 percent on time, and 95 percent within a day. And while we are making all these changes, that is a pretty good—you know, a pretty good outcome for the magnitude of what we are doing. We will watch this as it gets closer to Christmas, and we will do accelerated processes to move it even faster.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you very much. Every day people in my community rely on Postal Service to get their social security checks, disability benefits, and prescription medications. We understand individuals waiting for their checks in the mail face extra challenges. Receiving checks promptly can be crucial for maintaining basic needs like keeping the lights on or putting food on the table. These are people who are relying on the timely delivery of their essential mail.

The data in my district show lower income communities experience poor on-time delivery performance compared to wealthier ones. So, Postmaster DeJoy, are you aware of the disparities of delivery performance related to socioeconomic status? And what is your plan to get service in historically disadvantaged areas up to standard?

Mr. DEJOY. So, I am not aware of—I mean, we have a lot—there is a lot of areas like this and a lot of new reporting that was just put out in the last 2 years. Our goal this year is a big transition year for all the different types of things that we are doing and we put in for a new standard. But our goal once the network is satisfied is to provide all 167 million delivery points with on-time service no matter where they are.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you so much. Well, I am very pleased that you are here. I am disappointed by the USPS' delayed implementation of major upgrades, its worsening condition and persistent failure to meet its own on-time delivery standards, particularly in low-income communities. I think we can agree that this is no way to run a critical agency delivering necessities to individuals in all of our districts, but again, I thank you for your service and your being here to address these needs and look forward to productive conversations on how we can improve this vital institution.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes Mr. Timmons from South Carolina.

Mr. TIMMONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DeJoy, thank you for being here today. I want to talk to you about the next generation delivery vehicle fleet. I represent Greenville and Spartanburg, South Carolina. Oshkosh has decided to manufacture tens of thousands of NGDVs in my district, and there was recent media reporting that the incoming administration may cancel the contract, and I want to walk through that, because I think that the media report was inaccurate, and I think a very reasonable policy is on the horizon that I am actually excited about.

So, the original contract was entered into in March 2022, and the initial order was 50,000 NGDVs and a mix of 90 percent internal combustion engine and 10 percent battery electric vehicle. Is that correct?

Mr. DEJOY. I am not sure exact date, but yes, that was the—

Mr. TIMMONS. Generally. How did you come up with the 90/10 ratio of internal combustion to electric vehicles?

Mr. DEJOY. We needed the design, and the acquisition had been on the table for 6 or 7 years.

Mr. TIMMONS. So, why was it changed in March of—in February '23 to go to 70 percent electric vehicles to 30 percent combustion engine?

Mr. DEJOY. Six years prior to my being here, the acquisition of next generation vehicle was on the table. OK? I came here. We needed vehicles. I pushed to put—I worked with the Board and we put the purchasing people made the selection and pushed to move forward of which 90 percent we bought—we ordered the 50,000 vehicles and we said let us dip our toe and look at what electric vehicles will do for us.

Mr. TIMMONS. You made a business decision to go—

Mr. DEJOY. I met with the Board. We made a business decision.

Mr. TIMMONS. That was probably a good decision at the time, right?

Mr. DEJOY. Right.

Mr. TIMMONS. So, why did Congress then force you to switch that to 70/30?

Mr. DEJOY. Well, we had about 500 lawsuits. In order to buy vehicles, I have to go through a whole bunch of different—I have to file an SEIS report. I have to go through the EPA, I have to go through all the state stuff.

Mr. TIMMONS. Sure.

Mr. DEJOY. So on and so forth.

Mr. TIMMONS. So, you were—it was against your business judgment to deviate from the 90 percent internal combustion engine and 10 percent electric vehicle and you completely flipped to 70/30 electric vehicle to combustion engine. Why did that happen?

Mr. DEJOY. I did not completely flip. It was a process that went on over a number of months in dealing with all the different activities we had, and eventually, eventually I would not be at this particular point in time if you did not give us the \$3 billion.

Mr. TIMMONS. OK. So, if we switch back to 90 percent combustion engine, and we fill the order, will that meet your business judgment and will that allow you to deliver mail?

Mr. DEJOY. Will it allow me to deliver mail?

Mr. TIMMONS. Will it achieve the objective of getting you new vehicles? Let us put it this way.

Mr. DEJOY. I think we are down this path. It is a good path.

Mr. TIMMONS. I have talked to Oshkosh. They can switch back to 90/10. They do not care.

Mr. DEJOY. I do not want to discuss my contracts here.

Mr. TIMMONS. OK. Well, I care about jobs in my district, and I want to make sure that you get the new vehicles that you need.

Mr. DEJOY. And I guess I helped you out here.

Mr. TIMMONS. Oh yes. Well, this is the thing. I do not want to throw the baby out with the bath water. You need new vehicles and there is no reason that we should spend a billion plus more dollars to impose a Green New Deal mandate on the post office, so we are going to work to switch back to what was your best business judgment, 90 percent combustion engines, 10 percent electric vehicles, and we are going to work with—

Mr. DEJOY. Best business judgment at the time with—

Mr. TIMMONS. What changed in 10 months?

Mr. DEJOY. Well, a lot has changed in 10 months with regard to the Nation's initiative to the—to electrification through other initiatives that we have with regard to carbon burning. We are a carbon burning pig. Right? We run around the country—

Mr. TIMMONS. All right. Let us put it this way. If the incoming Trump Administration wants to switch back to 90 percent combustion engines, can they do that through executive action?

Mr. DEJOY. I have my plan and we are proceeding with the plan that we have unless, you know, something—

Mr. TIMMONS. Unless you receive direction from Congress and the Executive branch. Because you are going to get it.

Mr. DEJOY. Direction is—I always get direction, right? It has to be legislation.

Mr. TIMMONS. OK. Does it have—was it legislatively mandated to switch from 90 percent combustion engine, 10 percent electric vehicle to 70 percent battery, 30 percent—

Mr. DEJOY. I was given \$3 billion and I worked a process and a methodology—

Mr. TIMMONS. When were you given \$3 billion? In the Inflation Reduction Act?

Mr. DEJOY. Yes.

Mr. TIMMONS. OK. I do not think any American believed that that reduced inflation, and that money needs to go back to addressing our debt and our deficit and we cannot spend recklessly.

Mr. DEJOY. Then you should not have passed it, sir.

Mr. TIMMONS. I did not vote for it. I can promise you that. And guess what? Congress is about to fix it. So, I look forward to working with the incoming Trump Administration to right this ship and to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars. They are out of balance. I want to protect the environment as much as anybody, but we got \$36 trillion in debt. We run a \$2 trillion deficit. This is reckless,

and we need to be competitive in the global economy, and we cannot do that if we spend money we do not have.

I am one of millions of Americans that had planned to purchase a house that cannot because my 2 1/2 percent mortgage is looking up at a 7 percent interest rate. This had consequences. It hurt the American people and we are going to fix this. So, with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back. Thank you.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. The Chair recognizes Mr. Casar from Texas.

Mr. CASAR. Good afternoon, Mr. DeJoy. In August of last year, I sent you a letter signed by 76 Members of Congress asking for the Postal Service to proactively implement OSHA's proposed rule that would protect workers from the extreme heat, and the response was you declined. And that is frustrating and confusing to me, so that is some of the questions I want to ask you about today.

Being a Congressman from Texas, my letter carriers talk about being able to fry an egg in their un-airconditioned vehicles on a hot day. Coming from Labor, before I was an elected official, part of my job, tragically, was to organize funerals and memorials for workers that work in the outdoors in places like Texas that when they get denied a water break or overstress in the heat can get hurt or die.

The proposed OSHA rule, to be clear, would apply to most of the private industry and to the Postal Service, and it is pretty simple. It would just require that when the temperature gets above 90 degrees workers are able to take a 15-minute break every couple hours and have water readily available to them. We know how important this kind of protection would be for postal workers on any given day.

We know that people like Eugene Gates, who was a Postal Service—long-time Postal Service employee, long-time letter carrier—tragically lost his life due to heat stroke carrying mail in Texas in the 104-degree heat last year. Also, the case for Wendy Johnson, a USPS worker in North Carolina who lost her life inside of a metal USPS truck in 95-degree heat just this last year, and that is just two of over 170,000 American workers who were injured and killed because of heat stress on any given year.

You could have agreed to use the proposed Department of Labor rule that has gone under extensive review, but instead you declined any voluntary changes. Essentially, the letter said that OSHA would have to force the USPS to do this kind of protection for USPS workers. So, I would like an explanation to it, but then my first question for you is also in your response. You said the Postal Service already has a heat prevention plan for workers, and in the letter, quote, "that it is recognized as extremely successful."

The current USPS plan has a mandatory annual heat illness training for workers which is supposed to allow letter carriers to take breaks to cool down from the heat. But last year the press investigated and reported that there were thousands of letter carriers across at least ten states who did not receive the training, but they were—they found fake records saying the Postal Service had provided that training. So, do you think I have summed this up appropriately, Mr. DeJoy? Do you have concerns about what you have heard about in the press about the fake records about heat protection for workers? And can you talk to me a little bit about—

Mr. DEJOY. We investigated that. We do not believe that the records were fake. They were batch loaded. They were batch loaded instead of individually loaded. So, we think the press report was inaccurate was my briefing on that situation.

With regard to the OSHA, it is something that is in process of being studied. We have our own program, which has been here for decades and has been reviewed and negotiated and with the involvement of our unions, and so forth, and it has been—it is recognized as a good program. If the OSHA plan comes out and gets approval, we will evaluate aspects of that and maybe incorporate it into our plan. So, certainly we have many, many carriers that go out in heat, in areas of heat, and we have these unfortunate issues often where people have underlying health issues that have this unfortunate outcome that we have.

But we feel we are, you know, getting new vehicles with air conditioning in them will be a big help. We are pushing to do that. But we will study the plan, but at the end of the day, we have—we have a lot of things, and a lot of things have been around for a long time. There is a lot to change.

Mr. CASAR. Understood, Mr. DeJoy. I think amongst all those things, we know that the lives and health and safety, including of your employees with underlying health conditions, which, of course, is so many Americans, should be of tantamount importance. And so, whether or not this *Politico* investigation across multiple states showed falsified heat records or not, I hope that you will reconsider this decision, because some places in Texas are not going to get the new vehicles for years. And that is if Members of the other side of the aisle do not try to defund those vehicles.

And so, I hope you will take a look, with worsening summers, with two of your own employees having died here, that we take this really seriously and you reconsider. I can tell you right now, if I was sitting that side of the desk, I would raise my hand and swear an oath that I had spoken with your own employees who told me they have been reprimanded for going off route to get a drink of water and they have gotten in trouble for trying to take a break.

And whether or not that is your intention, I hope that you really look into it and do everything you can. I know that is not your intention, to be clear. I know it is not your intention, but I hope you that do something about it. Honestly, it would really, really make a big difference. Chairman, I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes Mr. Higgins from Louisiana.

Mr. HIGGINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DeJoy, welcome back before Congress. My goodness. Mail delivery, I think all of us should acknowledge, is a very personal thing. And therefore, you know, as representatives of our constituents, we receive—all of us do, 435 offices we receive the most heartfelt messages from our constituents with very personal interactions with their post office and their mail carrier, and we take those communications seriously.

I have to say, good sir, that you have been—you have been strong, man. 4 1/2 years on a thankless job appearing before Congress. And, you know, attacked from both sides of the aisle. I do

not know if that is good or bad, but it is certainly consistent when it comes to Mr. DeJoy appearing before committees of Congress in both chambers of House and the Senate. So, referencing my acknowledgement that mail delivery is a very personal interaction with the Federal Government, would you agree with that, Mr. DeJoy? Historically?

Mr. DEJOY. I think it is—there is a quality auditor at the end of every delivery.

Mr. HIGGINS. Speak into the mic just a little bit.

Mr. DEJOY. There is a quality auditor at the end of every delivery, which is your constituents—everyone's constituents. And my customers.

Mr. HIGGINS. I am just saying that, especially, per se, our elders, many of our elders across the country whom we love and respect, their personal interaction with their government, that they love, every day is commonly limited to how they get their mail and maybe some brief exchange with their carrier.

So, my father used to say that, "son, if you take care of the small things in life, you will have established some habits wherein the big things take care of themselves."

So, I would like to talk to you about a small issue that I think is reflective of the kind of challenges my colleagues on both sides of the aisle face and on a regular basis from my constituents. And I want to hear how you can deal with this.

I have a small town of Henderson—it is under 2,000 people—in my district, and in October of last year, they lost their contract postal unit, their CPU. So, it had been considered the post office in the town for a long time, but it was actually a private contract with the post office, and the guy retired. So, we ended up with about just 50 or 60 addresses with no post box, you know, had no delivery mechanism at their address. You know, they had no means by which to receive their mail other than driving to the post office in the next town over.

And that is still the case. We have not been able to recontract with a new contract postal unit. I spoke with the Mayor—I have been speaking with the Mayor since then, his name is Sherbin Collette, a great guy. We are trying to fix this problem.

So, I am going to ask you, a cluster mailbox, I looked up the prices. The nicest, most expensive ones to service, you know, 60 to 80 people, with smaller drawers and larger drawers, would cost under \$50 grand. The city has the land and has parking space out there. The courthouse and the city—the city services there are not—they do not have Postal Service. They have to drive to the next town.

Cannot we just solve this simple problem by having a cluster mailbox installed in little Henderson, USA, and reassure America that you are willing to fix the small things?

Mr. DEJOY. So, Congressman, we have—my first—you know, there is a saying, you do first what is necessary, right. And trying to get our internal system of operating and moving mail around the country is the first thing that we—I have got to work on.

We are looking at our whole retail process, both in terms of large communities and small communities, and how do we address these things. And we have lots of—

Mr. HIGGINS. Well, we have the answers. I mean——

Mr. DEJOY. No, but putting a cluster box——

Mr. HIGGINS [continuing]. Install a cluster mailbox and deliver it right there at town hall.

Mr. DEJOY. But we do not install cluster boxes. The developers or the cities and so forth, those are the people that do that. And then whether you get mail delivery there is another set of rules that get—that I agree are quite—quite specific.

Mr. HIGGINS. Well, I am going to yield. My time is expired. But, Mr. DeJoy——

Mr. DEJOY. I will look into this.

Mr. HIGGINS [continuing]. I ask your commitment to just work——

Mr. DEJOY. Is it Henderson?

Mr. HIGGINS [continuing]. With my office.

Mr. DEJOY. Henderson, you said?

Mr. HIGGINS. Henderson, Louisiana. It is 50 or 60 Americans that cannot get their mail. Especially my elders I am concerned about. You know, they have to drive an entire town over to that post office.

Seem like we should be able to fix that in a year and a—in over a year. I am looking forward to working with your office personally. Let us just resolve that issue.

Mr. Chairman, I yield.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back.

The Chair recognizes Ms. Lee from Pennsylvania.

Ms. LEE. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think it cannot be overstated how vital the Postal Service is to this country. It is the only mail delivery service that reaches every single address in the United States. Yet what is being seen during Postmaster General DeJoy's time is slower deliveries, increased costs, poor and even deadly conditions for employees, and an erosion of trust in this institution.

From what I am hearing in my district in Pittsburgh, the Postal Service's unresponsiveness has added to that distress. Just this year, 15 of your employees working in my district reached out to my office with complaints of an abusive and hostile work environment. They came to my team because they had nowhere else to turn to at the Postal Service. They had made their complaints, they had gone to those above them, and they still got no help.

Those workers sent letters to every one of my office locations because they were so used to being ignored and unheard. It is completely unacceptable to have so many employees reaching out for help and for no one at the Postal Service to do anything about it.

So, my question, Mr. DeJoy, is, do you have a formal process to address employee complaints, and is it just being ignored, or do you have a way to address these issues?

Mr. DEJOY. Congresswoman, we have—the Postal Service has long-standing practices on how to deal with complaints within the organization, going up to the—going up through my organization, or if there is harassment or other things like you are saying, they go, just pick up the phone and call the OIG.

Ms. LEE. So, they were ignored? You have the processes, but they were ignored?

Mr. DEJOY. I do not know what incidents—you need to give me more specifics. I doubt that they were ignored.

Ms. LEE. OK. Well, I doubt that any of my constituents made that up, but I will definitely connect our teams so that we can get those directly to you. We would actually love the opportunity to do that.

Can you commit to improving and creating a process or outlining us what it is and actually listen to take action to improve the working conditions of Postal Service employees?

Mr. DEJOY. I have spent—I have converted over 100,000 people to full-time positions. I have made the workplaces significantly better in many of our operations. I have—

Ms. LEE. Mr. DeJoy, I am really sorry, but your employees do not agree.

Mr. DEJOY. I bet you a bunch of my employees do agree.

Ms. LEE. Well, the ones in my district do not, so I will not speak to ones outside of my district. But the ones that we have spoken to in my district—

Mr. DEJOY. The 15 you are talking about?

Ms. LEE [continuing]. Currently do not. Oh, I am certain that we can get more, and of course we will direct them right to you.

Mr. DEJOY. OK.

Ms. LEE. Thank you so much.

Another issue from my district, not of those 15, involves a local tax collector, a job that is an important local government function and relies on timely and accurate mail delivery. Not getting those bills on time or at all can mean late fees or missing out on pay-early discounts.

One of the problems is mail that is coming back as undeliverable. Yet this person did not get the return-to-sender until a year later, way past the time needed to catch and fix this issue.

So, to be clear, something will be mailed out. It would not be returned to sender within a year, so long outside the window that they could remedy any of the issues for incorrect address or whatever.

Can you explain how it would take over a year to receive a return-to-sender piece of mail?

Mr. DEJOY. If there are—there are processes that we have that are manual processes that have, you know, tens of millions of pieces of mail going through. And there is a reliability rate that is not a hundred percent. So, that could—that could happen, and it can get stuck in a casing or in a mailbox or—I mean, in a machine or something like that.

Ms. LEE. Thank you.

So, this constituent has complained to the Postal Service multiple times about both the return time and the undeliverable addresses themselves. My office has also brought the problem to both the local and Federal-level Postal Service offices, and it still has not improved.

The most recent response from the Postal Service is that they consider the problem solved because they no longer received any complaints.

Do you know why they are not receiving the complaints anymore?

In order to make a complaint, the constituent has to speak to a manager. Yet every time she goes to the office, no manager can be found.

Mr. DeJoy, why is there no follow-up process for customer complaints to make sure a problem has actually been solved?

Mr. DEJOY. Well, we do have significant follow-up for customer complaints. We have over 3,000 people in our call centers. We have, you know, people within our retail centers—our 31,000 retail centers—for methodologies to file complaints. So—

Ms. LEE. So, just to be clear, is it just a difficult process—

Mr. DEJOY. Well—

Ms. LEE [continuing]. And is it intentionally difficult to just pretend that the problems have been solved or do not exist? Because, again, they are marking these as no longer being a problem or considered solved because they are no longer able to complain.

Mr. DEJOY. Well, we do have mistakes made and we do have people that do not do their jobs effectively, right? But I do not think that is intentional.

Ms. LEE. Yes, I think there are people who maybe do not.

Mr. DEJOY. As does any organization of our size.

Ms. LEE. Certainly. Thank you so much. I am reclaiming my time. But I just wanted to say, the Postal Service is not going to improve its major problems until they actually listen to their customers and their employees. Right now, it is clear that you are not doing that.

It is unacceptable that such a vital part of our country function has become so unreliable and controversial. They need to do better for the American people. I thank you so much for your time, and I yield back.

Mr. DEJOY. And I disagree with your premise.

Ms. LEE. I understand.

Chairman COMER. The gentlelady yields back.

I will recognize myself now for my questions.

Postmaster DeJoy, we hear—you know, everybody has ideas on how to make the Postal Service better. My concern, as you know, is the hemorrhaging of cash.

As I said in my opening statement, I appreciate the fact that you were willing to take this job on. I appreciate the fact that you have a plan and you are trying to implement that plan. That is what we want. That is what we want with DOGE. That is what the American people want. They want people trying to make government more efficient. I think you are trying to do that.

When we talk about efficiency, especially Members on this side of the aisle, we think of privatization, and you will have people say, oh, we should privatize the Post Office. The problem with that is nobody wants the—to deliver the mail to every house in America 6 days a week and to operate all those retail postal facilities. There is no private company in the world that wants that. So, a lot of my friends in my party need to realize that. There is no private company that wants to do that.

But there are private companies that are interested in mail sorting. There are private companies that are interested—which is where I think a lot of the problems are, from people on both sides

of the aisle. You know, there is issues with mail getting lost and mail—you know, sorting the mail.

Are you open to any, you know, any type of privatization, any type of pilot projects or anything like that with different facets of the Postal Service?

I know you—we privatized the logistics of the mail, but are there other areas of privatization that you would be open to—partnerships and things like that?

Mr. DEJOY. So, we—we cut—first of all, when Congress or an administration asks me to have a discussion about initiatives, as I did in the first administration when I came in and the next administration that came in and this administration, and all the Congresses, I will work with you to understand what it is that you want us to consider. And I will work very hard to either identify that we can do it or to say that it is just not going to work for us.

Let me say, when I came in, we had 500 different places with contractors, our people and so forth, doing random things, OK, in terms of how to process that. I have to get that down to 225 fully functional operations with high precision. I think I can do that. OK. But we have a lot of rules and a lot of, you know, critique and resistance.

I just went to move five percent of the local canceled mail—five percent of the mail from 60 locations into a major sorting center—sorting centers close by so we can handle that. I had, like, 20 Senators stop me.

Chairman COMER. Right, I understand.

Mr. DEJOY. I had—

Chairman COMER. Oh, I know. They all called me. They all called me.

Mr. DEJOY [continuing]. Senators calling me about what mail machine I was moving—

Chairman COMER. Right.

Mr. DEJOY [continuing]. Out of a plant.

Chairman COMER. Right. Right. And I know that. Believe me, I know that. I cannot go to the bathroom without a Senator or Representative stopping me and giving me a postal horror story.

But at the end of the—where we are now, do you think your reorganization plan is working? Do you think that we are going to improve performance and cut our losses?

I mean, the goal of the Postal Service is to break even, and we are not doing that.

Mr. DEJOY. We no longer have a monopoly. We have an obligation. We have \$39 billion—

Chairman COMER. I know as much about it as anybody.

Mr. DEJOY [continuing]. Worth of mail that costs us \$75 billion to deliver it. I have to reduce the \$75 billion to \$70-or something. I have to grow our package business. I got to move everything together. That is the deal.

I think that we can be vibrant. We can serve the American people. We can cover a lot of our costs, OK, and then we could look at things in the Congress that—I have \$10 billion of unfunded mandates, things that you require us to do, that cost us money.

Chairman COMER. Well, in our postal reform bill that we passed in a bipartisan manner out of this Committee, which became law,

you know, we provided funding and we changed a lot of the liability obligations that you had. And, you know, we have tried to help the Postal Service. It has been, you know, it has been disappointing, the losses.

Mr. DEJOY. Yes, but you also mandated that we deliver to 167 million—

Chairman COMER. I understand.

Mr. DEJOY [continuing]. Addresses 6 days a week. Do you know what kind of cost that is? Mandating and legislating 167—

Chairman COMER. I do, I do. But, again, if there is a way that we can make this thing break even, if there is something legislatively that we can do, I am more than willing to try to help with that.

But, you know, the days of bailouts and handouts are over. I mean, the American people spoke loud and clear. And, you know, as I say—I jumped in on Mr. Palmer's questions. I worry about that EV money sitting around, that it may be clawed back.

I think there are lots of areas where there is going to be significant reform over the next 4 years, and there are—I am just—you know, I am on your side. I am—

Mr. DEJOY. I think you should reform the regulations.

Chairman COMER [continuing]. The advocate. My grandmother spent her career as a mail carrier in Red Boiling Springs, Tennessee. I am on the side of the Post Office.

But I am telling you, there are lots of ideas that I do not know whether they would be advantageous or not to the Postal Service, but there are a lot of ideas out there about significant changes. And I just—I hope that you are given an opportunity to implement these reforms.

The problem is with the losses. And, you know, I am over—I gave Mr. Raskin 2 1/2 minutes extra, and I am going to ask one more question to the Inspector General.

Ms. Hull, in light of the losses this year and projected losses next year, does the Office of Inspector General have any ideas or solutions as to how we can limit the losses or even get to the objective of trying to break even?

Ms. HULL. We have done some work, particularly in our research area, where we have identified where some of the costly obligations that I spoke of earlier related to the Postal Service, particularly around the retirement funds and that area. We are also doing some research work that should come out, I think in the spring or early summer, on other posts around the world.

The problems the Postal Service has experienced are not specific to the United States. Posts around the world have struggled—

Chairman COMER. Well, are postal rates too cheap? Is that anything that you thought about? I mean, is it—are they too expensive and that is limiting the—I mean, these are questions—

Ms. HULL. Yes, right.

Chairman COMER [continuing]. You all need to look into if you haven't.

Ms. HULL. Yes. We did—

Chairman COMER. And if an obligation for retirement—obviously that is a huge expense, a huge liability—should we be hiring more people at the Postal Service? I mean, you know, are there private

sector solutions? These are things the IG's Office needs to look at—

Ms. HULL. Yes, definitely.

Chairman COMER. And again, I will say this: This Committee has jurisdiction over the Inspector General. I have found there are good Inspector Generals, there are average IGs, and there are poor IGs—

Ms. HULL. Uh-huh.

Chairman COMER [continuing]. And we are trying to work with the new Administration on identifying which is which and—you know, so we need the IGs to work with us, because finally this town is fixing to get serious about being more efficient. So, we will be in communication with that.

My time is expired.

Ms. HULL. Definitely. I look forward to meeting with your staff on that.

Chairman COMER. OK.

Yes?

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Chairman, could I just ask you about that? You piqued my interest with the comment about the IGs. Is that something that we are going to do as a Committee, looking at the different IGs?

Chairman COMER. I mean, if—I keep up with your correspondence and stuff.

Mr. RASKIN. Yes.

Chairman COMER. I mean, if there are issues with IGs, we can certainly talk about it. I mean, we have—there are—you know, I think there are good IGs, just as I said, there are bad IGs, and there are some IGs that have never been given information that they have requested, like the CIGIE.

Mr. RASKIN. Yes.

Chairman COMER. Or like the SIGAR—SIGAR IG.

Mr. RASKIN. Well, I am delighted to hear it, and I would love to participate in that with you. I know our Members are very interested in making sure we get the good ones to stay.

Chairman COMER. All right. The Chair recognizes Ms. Pressley. Ms. PRESSLEY. Thank you.

The United States Postal Service is much more than a delivery system. It is a lifeline. People depend on it for medications, checks, ballots, and much more.

But, Mr. DeJoy, your leadership has placed this lifeline at risk. Your decisions to diminish services and consolidate processing plants have had devastating impacts on my constituents in the Massachusetts 7th.

One constituent from Somerville reports missing checks and legal documents, describing how she repeatedly contacted USPS only to have her cases closed with false assurances.

I ask unanimous consent to enter into the record this constituent letter from May 2024.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Another constituent in Grove Hall waited for time-sensitive letters regarding her Social Security disability benefits that never arrived.

I ask unanimous consent to enter into the record this constituent letter from August 2024.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Ms. PRESSLEY. These are not isolated incidents. More than 80 Roxbury residents signed a letter to my office regarding the understaffed local post office. Here is an excerpt: It is common for customers to have to wait 30 to 45 minutes for service, and frequently no one is at any of the windows. The building often feels abandoned.

They go on to describe delivery services and issues: Mail service in the surrounding ZIP Codes has been similarly terrible for years now. Despite truly wonderful mail carriers, we frequently experience issues such as mail delays of 2 to 4 weeks, lost mail, misdelivered mail, and mail left outside of mailboxes.

One constituent even reported being unable to pay their rent due to the delivery of a late Social Security check.

I ask unanimous consent to enter into the record this constituent letter from April 2024.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Mr. DeJoy, maybe Congress should pass a law that forces you to receive all your income and prescriptions via postal mail.

Would you think it acceptable to have to wait a month or more to pay your bills or to take your medication, yes or no?

Mr. DEJOY. I—

Ms. PRESSLEY. Do you think it is acceptable, yes or no?

Mr. DEJOY. I do not think it is acceptable.

Ms. PRESSLEY. OK. Thank you.

And I am just curious, having listened to your testimony earlier today, and since you agree this is not an acceptable cadence of service, what grade would you give yourself?

Mr. DEJOY. I would give myself an "A."

Ms. PRESSLEY. OK. I—well, we—I vigorously disagree with that assessment.

Mr. DEJOY. I knew you would.

Ms. PRESSLEY. I would certainly give you a failing grade.

Mr. DEJOY. I knew you would.

Ms. PRESSLEY. What immediate actions will you take to restore reliable services in communities like Roxbury, Grove Hall, and Hyde Park, and Somerville in my district?

Mr. DEJOY. Well, in terms of general actions, it is the same actions and efforts that I have taken since I walked in the door here 4 years ago, to try and improve the Postal Service. I will take—my staff will take down the names of the cities you asked about and I will look into them specifically.

Ms. PRESSLEY. All right. During unannounced visits to Roxbury and Grove Hall branches—I want to transition into work force for a moment—I saw firsthand that workers are demoralized and under-resourced, leaving communities under-served.

I am grateful to the American Postal Workers Union for raising the alarm on this and standing up for their members.

On your watch, Mr. DeJoy, the USPS has been undermined across the board and even prompted audits of postal operations throughout Boston neighborhoods.

Ms. Hull, after complaints from my office and others in the Massachusetts delegation, the Office of the Inspector General, in fact, launched an investigation. I look forward to reading their forthcoming report on these audits.

In the meantime, how can my constituents, who continue to struggle unjustly with USPS services, when they have concerns around—where should they communicate, via hotline, website, or other means?

Ms. HULL. Yes, our hotline is definitely open and available. We get a number of hotline complaints, probably this last year, about 350,000 complaints. We use those complaints—we obviously cannot respond to every single one, but we use data analytics very effectively to identify hotspots around the country.

Ms. PRESSLEY. What is the hotline?

Ms. HULL. Our hotline—you can go to our website at *uspsoug.gov*, and there is a hotline form. All those complaints come in, and we look at all of them, using data analytics to identify where hotspots are occurring, and use that to inform where we do audit work and investigative work as well.

Ms. PRESSLEY. All right. Thank you very much.

You know, it is, in fact, the collective action of my constituents and those from communities across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that brought attention to these issues, and I am proud to stand alongside them.

And, Mr. DeJoy, we certainly will keep the pressure up until we see a restoration of equitable, reliable services, because every community deserves exactly that.

Thank you, and I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The Chair now recognizes Mr. Clyde from Georgia.

Mr. CLYDE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for waiving me on. I appreciate that very much.

Postmaster General DeJoy, I am not here to blast you, OK? I am here to try to make things better as best we possibly can. But first I want to talk about a little bit of frustration that have come from the folks in my district, and so you will just have to bear with me just a moment, sir.

All right. As you can see in this chart behind me, when the consolidation of the Palmetto facility in Georgia occurred, postal delivery rates went from over 80 percent down to 36 percent. And now up—as of July, the last data I personally have, we are now up at about 76 percent.

So, from the bottom at 36 percent, you know, going up to 76 percent, that is a 40 percent increase, and thank you for putting resources into that effort. We highlighted it, and it is getting better. I appreciate that.

Back in August, I wrote a letter to you, when things were still not where they should be, and it talked about the Postal Regulatory Commission and the fact that in this entire consolidation effort—or effort, we had not seen the Post Office reach out to the PRC to get an advisory opinion.

Now, I will tell you that my letter went to you—to you directly—on August the 13th. OK. By chance, did you read that letter?

Mr. DEJOY. I do not remember, sir.

Mr. CLYDE. OK. All right.

Mr. DEJOY. I get a lot of letters, sir.

Mr. CLYDE. Well, I will commend you on this. We got a reply on August the 22d. I do not think any agency has ever replied to Congress that quickly, and so thank you for that.

Now, my concern, though, is that the person who actually signed the letter, the reply, was Mr. Scott Kennedy, the government relations representative and not yourself. I would much have preferred your signature on this response. But it talks about acknowledging that a Postal Regulatory Commission advisory opinion was not sought, OK, and that they would be doing that going forward.

Do you find—I mean, is a Postal Regulatory Commission opinion, is that important to the Post Office?

Mr. DEJOY. It is required—

Mr. CLYDE. Yes, it is, you are right.

Mr. DEJOY [continuing]. When we think we are going to have significant changes in service on a national basis.

Mr. CLYDE. OK.

Mr. DEJOY. This was not intended to be a significant change of service, as consequential as it became locally, but even such, it was not on a national basis. It would not—this—I put a half a billion dollar plant in Georgia. We had 10—I have 18,000 workers in Georgia that work in some of the worst facilities I have ever seen in my life—and I have been in a lot of places around the world looking at facilities—and this is what we intended to try and fix.

And we had significant issues unrelated to the plant, and we—it was awful, I agree, but in the long run, we will have great service in all of Georgia because we are touching six or seven different plants down there.

Mr. CLYDE. OK. Do most post offices still have a slot that say, “local mail only,” and is that mail itself processed at that post office for local delivery?

Mr. DEJOY. No. No post office is actually—other than in election and extraordinary measures, all mail that is collected at post offices go to someplace else to be processed.

Mr. CLYDE. OK. All right. This is a text message from one of my constituents directly to me, and it says, “Is there anyone in your group of folks that can put a knot in the tail of the Postal Service about the poorest possible service being provided to us? I cannot get a bill paid or bills received on my end on time for anything in the world.”

He says, “I am not sure what the issue is. We and many others around here get our bills late, our payments we make do not show up to the places we mail to, and we personally get rent checks that are mailed to us from across town that will show up a month late. It is absolutely terrible. Not just a small issue but huge. Even our tax commissioner said to pay taxes online because of the issues with the mail.”

All right. And so, I am trying to figure out a way that local mail can be delivered locally where it does not take a month to get local mail, and I would like your input as to how we can make sure that happens.

Mr. DEJOY. Georgia has had—especially in the Atlanta area—has had the worst service in the Postal Service for many, many,

many, many years, which is one of the reasons why we chose to—it was a growing state—we chose to put the significant investment in this particular area. And we—as part of this transition, we are having problems, but we are also cleaning up a lot of those types of things that were—were happening in these 10 separate facilities and so forth.

We are very committed, I am very committed to getting, you know, Georgia, all these locations, to follow the service standards that we are seeking now, you know, to change, because the service standards that we have are not achievable for the dollars that we have to spend. And, in fact, I think they are kind of ridiculous.

We will—we are making requests that will—and my expectation is that we will have reliable mail service in the area, and we will also have improved retail operations with expanded services in the retail centers that we have, you know, throughout the Nation.

This is a big, big makeover, both—not only in terms of facilities and infrastructure, in terms of schedules and how we route mail and so forth, and even in the expectations of our people.

We did things very randomly. Now we are asking everyone to work a specific function in a specific manner to a specific schedule to a specific productivity rate. That is a big change to put on an organization.

Mr. CLYDE. Well, thank you for that. I personally visited the postal center in Palmetto, and I saw the plan of all the various, different, multiple postal offices, or postal buildings, consolidated into one.

But, look forward to working with the Postal Service to make sure that it meets that statutory requirement up here of 93 percent. Thank you, sir, and I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman's time has expired.

The Chair recognizes Ms. Crockett from Texas.

Ms. CROCKETT. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to talk about cars, cons, concepts of a plan, and compensation. I am going to actually start with the cons.

There has been mention of DOGE and how that is going to come into play, and I am curious to know, just yes or no, Inspector General Hull, quick question, have you found that if the Post Office was to cut its work force by 75 percent, that that would somehow fix all of the problems within the Post Office, yes or no?

Ms. HULL. No. We have not done any work in that area like that.

Ms. CROCKETT. Thank you.

Postmaster DeJoy, are you anticipating that a 75 percent cut in your work force would solve all of the problems of the Post Office, yes or no?

Mr. DEJOY. No.

Ms. CROCKETT. OK. So, it is interesting, because my colleagues seem to be so excited because there is a new sheriff in town, and the co-sheriffs of the DOGE Committee, more specifically, Mr. Ramaswamy, has actually proposed cutting 75 percent of our Federal work force to try to rein in some of the spending.

Now, I want to talk about cars, because cars have been discussed a lot as well as it relates to spending. And I want to know from you, Postmaster General, can you tell me approximately what is the lifespan of one of your postal vehicles?

Mr. DEJOY. So——

Ms. CROCKETT. And I know you have various vehicles——

Mr. DEJOY. Yes.

Ms. CROCKETT [continuing]. So, let me just say the letter carrier vehicles that they drive.

Mr. DEJOY. The letter carriers have a few different vehicles. Commercial, off-the-shelf vehicles will last us 6, 7 years.

Ms. CROCKETT. OK.

Mr. DEJOY. The special purpose-built vehicles that we had, the LLVs that we had, lasted—were supposed to last 20. They wound up; we are using them 30. New vehicles that we are buying, the special-built, special-purpose vehicle, we expect to last longer than 20 years or longer.

Ms. CROCKETT. OK. So, as we are comparing the various costs—and there has been a lot of conversation about the fact that there are electric vehicles, and it is my understanding that the electric vehicles are the ones that now have air conditioning, correct?

Mr. DEJOY. All the vehicles now have air conditioning, but, yes.

Ms. CROCKETT. OK. You know, earlier it was brought up, and the reason that I care so deeply about the vehicle situation is that my constituent, Eugene Gates, was brought up earlier, who lost his life. This was somebody who did not need extra hours of training on how to properly hydrate because this was someone who dedicated almost 40 years of his life to the Post Office.

The reality is that the working conditions were not working. That is just the reality. This is someone who had done this job for so long.

And I am going to be honest—and I know that your office has received letters from us regarding Mr. Gates, but I am concerned, as my colleague, Mr. Casar, laid out, that we still have not figured out how to modernize and make sure that the working environment is going to work for our postal employees.

So, for instance, as you are rolling out these new vehicles, have you decided on a way to prioritize where these vehicles are going to go, and does that overlap with the areas in which we know, say, experience the most extreme heat conditions, such as in places like Texas? Have they been prioritized?

Mr. DEJOY. Yes. So, we are not filling the whole need, right. So, there is a process of replacement of vehicles that——

Ms. CROCKETT. Let me—and I am going to have to cut you, because I have got to get to a few more things and I am running out of time. So, I am just curious, are we prioritizing? Even if it means that you are going to swap out—let us say, the vehicles are not necessarily——

Mr. DEJOY. I want to give you——

Ms. CROCKETT [continuing]. Being swapped out in Texas, but we know that in another area they do not experience the extreme heat, so we move those vehicles to those areas and make sure that the vehicles that are going to keep our postal employees safe are put into those areas that they are needed the most.

Has that been a consideration?

Mr. DEJOY. We consider heat—a lot of the country gets heat and——

Ms. CROCKETT. I understand. We get extreme heat, is what I am saying.

Mr. DEJOY. I will get you the process. I would say that it would not satisfy you to see that just Texas is getting any special deference. We have a bunch of procedures that—and plans that we—strategies that we have to deploy vehicles. Let me get those for you.

Ms. CROCKETT. OK. I would appreciate that.

Mr. DEJOY. OK.

Ms. CROCKETT. As it relates to Delivering for America, it feels as if it is more a concept of a plan than an actual plan because, as you stated earlier in your testimony, you have projections and clearly those projections were completely off.

But even as I have had my team, as we have sat here, really comb through and make sure that we did not miss it, Delivering for America, correct me if I am wrong, does it deal with drones at all?

Mr. DEJOY. No.

Ms. CROCKETT. OK. So, when we are talking about modernizing, do you not believe that it would be incumbent upon your organization to consider something like drones? Because, as I have stated before, not only do I currently represent urban Dallas, Texas, area, but I lived in East Texas, and I know what it looks like when you are trying to deliver, say, in rural America. And I know that there are other organizations that are doing things such as drone deliveries which, number 1, if you do not have the work force that you need, it is very helpful. Number 2, it is a lot more efficient because now you are talking about homes that are separated so far. And as you have heard from some of my colleagues in rural America talking about the delivery problems, I do not know how we can talk about modernization of any part of Federal Government and not talk about drones.

We talk about it when we are talking about the border. We talk about it when we are talking about our military. And I am just asking that if we are going to talk about a plan that really is looking at modernization, we look at something like drones. Especially if DOGE gets their way and they start to get rid of some of your work force, this potentially would be something that you would need.

And the final thing that I have to say—I know I am a little over, but I am just asking for a little bit of leeway—is on the compensation piece. I will be honest with you and tell you that, before walking in today, I was completely unaware of the fact that your compensation was so high. All I know is that, as it was laid out before, your compensation has gone up approximately 17 percent since you have been in this post, and you consider yourself to have a grade “A.”

I am just curious to know, on average, when we look at our postal workers, such as workers like my constituent, Eugene, who had been with the Post Office and literally gave his life of service to the Post Office, and—he had been there for almost 40 years—on average, are we seeing that there is an increase in compensation to the tune of approximately 17 percent, in the same time span as you have been with the Post Office, for the average postal employee?

Mr. DEJOY. I think that over the last 4 years—I mean, I do not know that it is a relevant comparison, but I think wages have gone up about 15 percent.

Ms. CROCKETT. OK. And my final question really quickly, is that—

Chairman COMER. Look, I am sorry, Ms. Crockett, you have gone 2 1/2 minutes over. We will let you submit that.

Ms. CROCKETT. OK.

Chairman COMER. All right.

Ms. CROCKETT. Thank you.

Chairman COMER. Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Mr. McCormick from Georgia.

Mr. MCCORMICK. Thank you, Chair. Very kind of you to bring me on to this Committee today to ask some very tough questions on a tough situation that we have right now.

My home state is Georgia, last in services rendered right now. I know you know that we dropped below 40 percent on time and we are now up to 75 percent, which is kind of an achievement, but nowhere close to where we need to be.

My personal experience in the last year is I had two certified letters, one to me from my tax returns from two miles away, certified. It took 4 months and a congressional inquiry to make it to my house. Four months, certified.

The other one, I sent a letter to approximately 11 miles away, to an address I have sent plenty of things to. I certified it because I was worried about it, worried about it because it was a check made out to somebody else, certified.

The due date came and went. I went down to the post office and asked where is my letter? They did not know.

And then when it finally came back to me as undeliverable to this address, which they cannot explain still, I got charged \$6 bucks for a letter to be certified, that could not be delivered, and there is no explanation.

When I asked to see management, so they can explain it to me, they did not have time for me. I came back later, I said, “Can I speak to—as a Congressman, to try to help them fix this problem?” You know what their response was? We do not have time.

I am glad you took time to be with me today because I want to address this from a personal and a nonpersonal issue.

When you talk about the future of the Post Office, I used to, as a little kid literally say, the Post Office is the one part of the government that I trust. On-time deliveries, they do not lose stuff.

In the last 4 years, your reputation has destroyed that—on your watch—destroyed that.

Businesses—almost every single business I know that wants to send a check out will not use the U.S. Postal Service anymore. I will not use the U.S. Postal Service anymore. That is on your watch.

The two major decisions I have seen you make, which is on the distribution centers and on employee hiring, have done nothing to mitigate this in real time ways.

I do not understand why you give yourself an “A” grade, as you just stated, when it comes to the delivery.

We have—I want to read this into the record, Mr. Chair. This is a letter from the entire Georgia delegation——

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. CLYDE. Thank you.

And your response, which I appreciate the response from your staff. But when you talk about—I went down and talked to—well, I tried to talk to my local postmaster. Could not get ahold of him. Even when I stood there and said, just tell when I can—I will leave my number, have him call me back. Never called me back.

That is your environment that you fostered in Georgia and other places in the country. And it is not isolated to just Georgia either, by the way. I know businesses in California that will not use the U.S. Postal Service because of theft, real time theft. It has never been—your reputation is done, whether you admit it or not.

In the military, if I have a skipper who things are going bad for, they are a good military officer, but you know what we do when things go wrong repeatedly, we relieve them. You know what you do when a CEO repeatedly fails and their business model falls apart and nobody wants to use that business anymore and it becomes nonprofitable, you fire them. You know what we do in government when organizations fail over and over and over again and become unaccountable and are not going in the right direction and have actually ruined the very business model that you seem to hold as a standard?

Because you are not going to expand postal service when you have a reputation for not delivering on time, not keeping the mail accountable on your watch. You, sir, do not get an “A” grade. You cannot give yourself that grade.

Mr. DEJOY. I just did.

Mr. MCCORMICK. You cannot.

Mr. DEJOY. I just did.

Mr. MCCORMICK. You cannot grade your own paper, sir. I have been to medical school——

Mr. DEJOY. Well, then——

Mr. MCCORMICK [continuing]. I got my MBA. You cannot. I am sorry. You are graded by the United States people, and they do not use your service anymore. You bankrupt us——

Mr. DEJOY. That is not true. That is not true. Our service on packages is growing——

Mr. MCCORMICK [continuing]. You bankrupt this through your reputation only.

Mr. DEJOY. Our office is growing.

Mr. MCCORMICK. Through your reputation, you are responsible for the fall of the Postal Service——

Mr. DEJOY. No. This Congress——

Mr. MCCORMICK [continuing]. And the lack of accountability.

Mr. DEJOY. This Congress is responsible for the fall of the Postal Service.

Mr. MCCORMICK. It does not—oh, so it is Congress’——

Mr. DEJOY. I am trying to fix—I am trying to fix——

Mr. MCCORMICK. On your watch.

Mr. DEJOY [continuing]. The Postal Service.

Mr. MCCORMICK. With all the AI——

Mr. DEJOY. Before my watch the same stuff happened, worse.

Mr. MCCORMICK. With all the AI, with all the computer systems, you are worse than if I took a horse——

Mr. DEJOY. You are talking to yourself.

Mr. MCCORMICK [continuing]. And picked up the mail and delivered it two miles down the road. That is you.

I hope you got that on camera. This is the response that the Postmaster just gave Congress when he does not like what he hears. Literally covered his ears and gave himself the grade of "A." And with that, sir, I rest.

Mr. DEJOY. Good.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back.

The Chair recognizes Mr. Mfume from Maryland.

Mr. MFUME. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and the Ranking Member, for getting us to this point.

Mr. DeJoy, good to see you again. I think the first time we sat across from one another like this was 4 years ago. And one of the colleagues on the Committee that day said, "Why does he want this job?" I did not have an answer then, and I really do not have an answer now, except that if you believe you can do something, you try to do it, and if you cannot, you fail, and everything else takes care of itself.

I was the first one to call for your resignation 4 years ago, and your supporters were the first to call for my resignation. So, the fact that we are still here I think says something. I do not know what it says, but we are here.

Couple quick things. Your very first predecessor, Benjamin Franklin, was the first Postmaster. He said in his first comments to the country that when the post offices are closed, people will suffer.

It was true then; it is true now. And, remarkably, over all those many years, the Postal Service has retained a 90 percent approval rating. That is according to the last Pew poll which was done in 2020. Unfortunately, since then, that rating—favorability rating has declined somewhat. And, you know, it is interesting that the Post Office is actually older than the country. 1775.

So, what you hear today, and I think what you heard over on the Senate side the other day, is an effort for a lot of Representatives, and I guess Senators, to express what we hear a lot of times and what we try to do about it when we get an opportunity to talk to you.

Now, I did not come here with gloom and doom. I want to say that I have been very active in interacting with your office. Whenever we have a problem, I am on the phone, I have got a staff person, we have got letters going out. And fortunately, we got a real good Postmaster for the city of Baltimore, LeGretta Goodwin. Do not know if you know her or not. She is doing a hell of a job; conscientious, very responsive, and tries every day, not to be perfect, but to help us in that city get closer to perfection.

We have got and had several post office job fairs over the summer. There is a lot of interaction. There is an actual council that involves local and private business and government that she heads up that I think is the right way to go. It is the right model, let me just say that.

One thing that I want to talk about that I absolutely support, and then I have got several questions that I am going to ask that you find a way to have someone on your staff to get back to me about, because there is not enough time in these short windows to answer difficult questions.

But I want to make sure that I am on the record again that I support the conversion to electronic vehicles. I mean, we have got 230,000 postal vehicles, and I believe, because of the carbon footprint that those vehicles alone are responsible for, that we have an obligation as a government to try to find a way to reduce emissions.

Now, I do not force that on anybody. I think the government is wrong when it mandates that you, him, and her, as consumers, have to buy electronic vehicles. That is—I would never do that, but the government is a consumer, so, yes, I think the government has a larger responsibility, which is why that \$3 billion was included in the Inflation Reduction Act so that you would have the money to be able to start the conversions.

And whether it is 90 percent or 70 percent, as was argued earlier, I think that is up to you with the direction of Congress. And one of the things you did not say was that you started out the way we mandated, and then we said, no, change this, and, how come you are not doing that? So, there is a lot of finger-pointing going around.

I just want, for the record, to know that these vehicles are important, and I do not know how you undo contracts. I would not want to be in your position where you let so many contracts and now people are telling you to go and change those.

If you, sir, could do me a favor and get back to me on three issues that, as I said, we do not have time for now, unfortunately.

Robberies. I am so sick and tired of postal delivery persons being robbed at gunpoint and knifepoint, being chased with bats, because we have got fools and clowns out here who are breaking the law, who want the arrow key, because they know if they get the arrow key, they can open all these multiboxes and they can steal. They steal from the poor, they go to high-end communities, they steal, and they have no concern for the life or the safety of those postal delivery persons, men and women that have been beat up and assaulted across this country. And what concerns me is that it is increasing.

I am also concerned about the increase in the Forever Stamp, because that stamp started out as a way of people to be able to save money. You purchase at this price, it is good forever, and you are free of the price increases that tend to come about in the interim. So, that is very concerning, particularly since we have had six increases in 2 years.

And the final thing that I really would hope that I can get some response, but also kind of cooperation with myself and maybe with other Members of Congress, are these thefts that occur that affect senior citizens where their Social Security checks are being stolen, where their mail is being delivered late, when they respond to pay a bill and charged a late fee not because they have done anything at all but because of the delivery systems back and forth, and the

theft of medicine that so many senior citizens rely on through the mail.

Those are important issues that I would like to believe affect all of us. I know they are on your desk, and your staff has been fortunate in, I think, finding a way to get back to myself and others with at least some semblance of what is going on.

And so, all that you hear today being expressed from all of us is a lot of frustration, but there are things that ought to be pointed to, as I did a moment ago, that where there is progress, that progress ought to be highlighted.

So, I do not know if we will see each other 4 years again from now, sitting across like this, or that things may have changed, but I do want to thank you for coming here.

And I get back to that original question, why does he want this job? Because I remembered what it was like 4 years ago when you walked in the door, and you are going to catch hell because you are not God and you cannot fix everything overnight. But understand that the frustrations are real frustrations from the people on this committee—Democrats, and Republicans—who want to get back to that 90 percent approval rating, when Americans trusted the Postal Service more than any other fixture of government.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the time.

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes Mr. Langworthy from New York.

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DeJoy, I spoke with the USPS in January of this year and wrote a letter to you in February expressing serious concerns with the transfer of mail operations from the Buffalo Processing & Distribution Center to the Northwest Rochester Processing & Distribution Center. My constituents and I shared serious concerns about USPS' claims that these operational changes will enhance on-time delivery rates and reduce delivery times.

Simply put, forcing mail sent to and from addresses in Buffalo, New York, to be processed through the Rochester Processing & Distribution Center, over an hour and a half away, introduces numerous opportunities for delay.

As expected, your test sites in Atlanta; in Houston; Richmond, Virginia, they all reported delays, with USPS attributing them to bad weather and other factors.

Mr. DeJoy, western New York is no stranger to severe weather, especially in our winter months as we are experiencing now, which frequently disrupts travel. Just last week, a snowstorm shut down parts of the New York state thruway and led to travel bans and advisories throughout Erie and Chautauqua Counties.

My constituents are rightfully worried that, under your modernization plan, they will not receive their critical medications, their important packages, or even bills on time.

So, Mr. DeJoy, considering the frequent severe weather disruptions in regions like western New York, what specific changes or improvements are you planning to implement under your modernization plan to ensure timely mail delivery, especially during adverse weather conditions?

Mr. DEJOY. So, with regard to the transfer of the mail processing, the outgoing mail processing from Buffalo to Rochester, that

was a totally different process that went on in Richmond and Atlanta. Atlanta and Richmond were completely built new plants and consolidation of a bunch of local operations.

We have, since announcing that, looked at the whole—there was like 50, 60 plants that were in this cancellation chain—moving of canceling—canceling outgoing mail. We have gone about it a different way now and followed 3661 to deal with the mail differently. And some of these plants we are not going to move the original cancellation, and Buffalo happens to be one of them.

So, that mail will stay in Buffalo, and we are going to deploy other practices to aggregate and consolidate outgoing mail. So, you will still receive that local turnaround cancel—

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Yes, I am grateful that that plan was scrapped, but it was of great concern.

My constituents are not just worried about the absurdity of local mail traveling hundreds of miles to reach a destination perhaps two miles away. They are also alarmed by your plan to outfit the Postal Service's fleet of electric vehicles.

Mr. DeJoy, this may not be an electric vehicle hearing, but let us be clear. Sending electric, mail delivery vehicles to rural communities, which I represent, in the dead of winter is a disaster waiting to happen. You are going to leave my constituents stranded without their mail when these vehicles break down in freezing temperatures, and worse, you will end up spending more on gas-powered rescue vehicles to save them.

So, nevertheless, the Post Office received Federal funding for electric vehicles and charging stations through the Inflation Reduction Act. Do you plan to maintain a fleet of gasoline-powered vehicles to service rural routes?

Mr. DEJOY. Every—sir, every—we have extensive studies with regard to the temperature deviations that we can withstand on all our routes, and there is a relatively small portion of our routes—I think 20 percent or less—that we would not put these vehicles in.

We look at every route with regard to whether it needs four-wheel drive or two-wheel drive, whether it can use a left-hand drive or a right-hand drive. So, we have diagnostics on every single route in the country, and we have—and we will use that information appropriately to deploy our—the type of vehicle that we deploy. And we have many, many emergency backup procedures that are put in all of our locations.

So, I think—and I am pretty certain—that we will deploy these vehicles, and they will be more effective than the old vehicles that we have that are breaking down everywhere.

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Boy, I hope you are right.

I want to use my remaining time here to discuss a district-related issue. The town of Woodhull, New York, a very small rural town in my district with a large Amish community, has been waiting for over 3 years for the post office to reopen. Unfortunately, extreme weather during the aftermath of Hurricane Debby—the community was once again flooded—brings this to light, the people of Woodhull and what they have—the sacrifices and the burdens that they have been stressed with over the last 3 years.

Do you have any updates on the Woodhull, New York, post office, and will you commit to working with me to ensure my constituents in Woodhull, that they can get their post office reopened?

Mr. DEJOY. Yes. I do not have an update. I can get you an update, and I will work with you. We have many of the—we have these situations where we lease most of our post offices. And when issues happen, there is probably too much negotiation that goes on to get the post office—post offices opening, and that is something that—

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Three years is a completely unacceptable timeline.

Mr. DEJOY. It happens, I know—

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Well, it—

Mr. DEJOY [continuing]. All over the place.

Mr. LANGWORTHY. But, you, sir, can fix it.

Mr. DEJOY. And I am—we will look at it.

Mr. LANGWORTHY. And I am going to hold your feet to the fire on that because this is unacceptable—

Mr. DEJOY. OK.

Mr. LANGWORTHY [continuing]. That these people have been without a post office, having to travel 20 miles to go to their nearest post office. It has been 3 years, and we have got nothing but the runaround from the USPS. And enough is enough. You know, you were supposed to bring business principles into the Postal Service. This is unacceptable to my constituents.

And all of my colleagues here understand the importance of the U.S. Postal Service. Our constituents rely on the USPS to run as efficiently as possible. And I hope that USPS is doing everything in its power to ensure that all Americans receive their mail in a timely and efficient manner, and I really hope that you will take some of what I had to say into account.

Thank you, and I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back.

Before I recognize Ms. Tlaib, I think Mr. Mfume has a request.

Mr. MFUME. Yes, I have a unanimous consent request, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DeJoy, I wrote you back in June—sorry that I did not bring this up earlier—requesting assistance of USPS for the Parren J. Mitchell postal building. It is a facility that has been standing since 1966, in dire need of repair, expansion, or relocation, and it is the gateway out of Baltimore City into Baltimore County.

So, it is a January—or June 27 letter. I ask unanimous consent, Mr. Chairman, that it be entered into the record.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. MFUME. Thank you again and thank Mr. DeJoy.

Chairman COMER. The Chair now recognizes Ms. Tlaib.

Ms. TLAIB. Thank you so much.

It is not just, of course, our Amish neighbors, but it is even communities like the city of Detroit. And if you can, Postmaster General, I do not know if you have a pen on you or anything, can you write down this? It is called Joyfield Station in Detroit. Everybody—great, everybody is writing it down.

It has been years that I have been, you know, trying to have you all move with urgency about the lack of staffing. The fact that my

residents are getting mail every other day there—and, again, I do not think it is because our, you know, workers there are not working hard enough. I really think it is some of the changes that have been happening.

And also, kind of to piggyback, I think one of my colleagues mentioned about how to actually put complaints forward and where does it go, it has changed, and it has really become very much a struggle for many of my residents that rely on the Postal Service.

So, Joyfield Station, please, we need to talk about what is going on there.

Postmaster DeJoy, what is universal service obligation? What is that?

Mr. DEJOY. Well, it is a really undefined—relatively undefined—

Ms. TLAIB. No, I think it is authority set by Congress, right?

Mr. DEJOY. A long time—

Ms. TLAIB. Yes, well, it is still law of the land. So, it is actually binding standards for prompt, reliable, affordable services, correct?

Mr. DEJOY. As I said, undefined.

Ms. TLAIB. No. It is pretty defined. If you want, I can get the law—get the standard for you. But it is actually part of your job to know what that is. So, I—my question, then, is what are we doing to fulfill the universal service obligations under the U.S. Postal Service?

Mr. DEJOY. Everything. First of all, the recent legislation put into the universal service obligation as far as I see it delivering 267 million addresses 6 days a week. We are investing. We have committed over \$15 billion into repairing the horrible conditions that we had, equipping our facilities, equipping our carriers.

Ms. TLAIB. I understand. Postmaster General, it is very rare when you see both sides of the aisle in this Committee actually agreeing.

Mr. DEJOY. I do not think when it concerns—

Ms. TLAIB. No. No, no, no. It is still delayed. There is issues. But I am telling you it is delayed. People are seeing some of the changes with your 10-year plan actually result in some really extreme decisions—you know, cases where folks are not getting their mail. It is really important.

So, yes or no, will your 10-year plan lead to closures of any more of the postal facilities that our constituents rely on? How many more?

Mr. DEJOY. Well, I have not closed any retail centers.

Ms. TLAIB. Did you close 200 mail processing plants?

Mr. DEJOY. I have not closed 200 mail processing plants.

Ms. TLAIB. 200 mail processing plants you did not close?

Mr. DEJOY. No, I did not do that.

Ms. TLAIB. OK. Let me tell you, what is this about—so are you planning to close 200?

Mr. DEJOY. I am planning to open bigger buildings and consolidate.

Ms. TLAIB. What they call the mega plants? This is important for my colleagues. So, 60 mega plants that you want to do?

Mr. DEJOY. We will have 60 regional processing and distribution centers and about 170 local processing and distribution centers

across the Nation, and we are closing about 180 annexes that did random things around the country.

Ms. TLAIB. Yes. So, I read in, I do not know, somewhere in Wyoming, did you hear about this? Where they have to go as far as, like, Denver to get their packages if they were not home? And, you know, the Postal Service came to there, knock knock, they were not home. They have to travel 45 minutes away to go get their package?

Mr. DEJOY. I am not—

Ms. TLAIB. Not aware of that.

Mr. DEJOY. Not aware of that.

Ms. TLAIB. OK.

Mr. DEJOY. We have got post offices all over Wyoming.

Ms. TLAIB. I understand. Something is happening though, Postmaster DeJoy—

Mr. DEJOY. Something has been happening for 20 years.

Ms. TLAIB. Postmaster DeJoy, I know I have only been here 6 years. I have never gotten this many complaints about our Postal Service until you were in—became in charge. Trust me, I know our Chairman and some other of my colleagues are seeing the same thing. Not only are they directly impacted, but our constituents are obviously feeling the same changes. It is really important. This is an important question, and Inspector, I may ask you the same.

Can you tell me the total cost of noncompliance with the American postal workers and letter carriers union contracts? How much has it cost us in some of the noncompliance actions?

Mr. DEJOY. More than it should have, but that has been going—

Ms. TLAIB. How much?

Mr. DEJOY. I do not know off the top of my head.

Ms. TLAIB. This is Oversight Committee. You have got to be—how much?

Do you know, Inspector? How much did it cost us that Postmaster DeJoy's leadership in noncompliance and union contracts?

Ms. HULL. I do not know the answer to that, but we are going to be doing an audit into that area upcoming this year.

Ms. TLAIB. What is it? Like \$5 million? What is it?

Mr. DEJOY. It is probably—it is in the millions.

Ms. TLAIB. It is in the millions.

Mr. DEJOY. But it has been in the millions for a long time.

Ms. TLAIB. You know, DeJoy, at the beginning, the postal workers were, like, OK, we see what you are going to try to do with this 10-year plan, yes or no, and then they changed their mind because they said we are going to—they actually—they are not in support of you. I do not know what you were saying. They actually passed a resolution calling for your resignation. Did you know that?

Mr. DEJOY. When?

Ms. TLAIB. The American postal workers, if I may submit it for the record, Mr. Chair, APWU, "American Postal Workers Union convention adopts a resolution to remove Postmaster General DeJoy September 16, 2022." Would you like me to get you the resolution?

Mr. DEJOY. I do not think they renewed that request in their last—

Ms. TLAIB. Can I send you this?

Mr. DEJOY. You can send it to me. I am aware——

Ms. TLAIB. Who do you think many of us are talking to? We are talking to the workers. We are talking to our neighbors.

Mr. DEJOY. And I talk to the workers also.

Ms. TLAIB. Yes. They said, quote, “because of delayed mail and undermined public confidence in the Postal Service,” verbatim from that resolution. Postmaster DeJoy, you do not have——

Mr. DEJOY. I have seven unions.

Ms. TLAIB. I understand that.

Mr. DEJOY. That was one.

Ms. TLAIB. But Postmaster DeJoy, we are not making this up. You are making it out like Members of Congress. There is too many of us that are telling you the same thing.

Mr. DEJOY. I am not saying that——

Ms. TLAIB. Honestly, it is not political, because guess what? Both Republicans and Democrats are giving you the same stories.

Mr. DEJOY. Well, I say Republicans and Democrats are significantly responsible for the condition of the United States Postal Service when I arrived here.

Ms. TLAIB. Well, maybe it is because you do not know the answer——

Mr. DEJOY. These issues have been manifesting themselves over the last 20 years.

Ms. TLAIB. Maybe it is because you do not know the answers. We are asking you questions. You do not even know how much in 2024 through the grievance tracking system—how many complaints have you had in the grievance tracking system? How many?

Mr. DEJOY. I——

Ms. TLAIB. Really important to know. How many grievances have been filed under your leadership?

Mr. DEJOY. I interact with my unions all the time.

Ms. TLAIB. But you cannot say they are in support of you. You do not even know how many grievances were filed. I will leave it at this, because——

Mr. DEJOY. Well, grievances have to do with——

Ms. TLAIB. Thank you, Mr. Chair, for being generous at this time. I called for this hearing and I told the Chairman this is one area that impacts all of our districts. Every corner of our country, every part of our country is impacted by this literally the Postal Service. We got to do better.

You are a public servant. You are not in the private sector anymore, Postmaster DeJoy. You have a higher standard. The public relies on you making the right decision. And please, for the love of God——

Mr. DEJOY. As they do you.

Ms. TLAIB. For the love of God, put the universal service obligations in your office. Print it out. That is literally supposed to be your guidance to the standard.

Thank you. I yield.

Chairman COMER. The gentlelady yields. The Chair recognizes Mr. Frost.

Mr. FROST. Thank you so much, Mr. Chair.

Mr. DeJoy, as I am sure you know, cluster—I want to talk about cluster boxes. Cluster boxes, they resemble PO boxes at a local post office. Sometimes we see apartment complexes use them. Where I live uses them as well. I know that USPS sometimes encourages communities to install cluster boxes. Mr. DeJoy, can you tell me more about how you decide when you encourage a community to use the cluster boxes? What factors are considered? Does the recommendation just go through you or the local postmaster? Can you talk a little bit about that?

Mr. DEJOY. No. So, rules were established, I think, 15 years ago with regard to home delivery that any new developments, and that is a wishy-washy definition as to what a new development is, because we often get into conflicts with an expansion of an old development, whether it is a new development or not. That we would not be going to the doorstep.

We would put cluster boxes in—that there be a requirement that the developer put the cluster box in for the new developments. And that has been an organizational business rule for at least 15 years, I believe.

Mr. FROST. Thank you. Ms. Hull, your office helps to make sure USPS is doing its job properly. Do you—have you all provided any kind of oversight or do you know of any oversight that happens with the cluster boxes and the request that goes—that go to communities on these?

Ms. HULL. We have not done that in a while, I do not believe. We have done some work probably five, 6 years ago in that area, but I do not know that we have done anything really recently.

Mr. FROST. I think it would be good to look into this, especially looking at patterns. The reason I ask is I have two communities in my district, Richmond Heights and Carver Shores. These neighborhoods have virtually no apartment complexes, yet they are being asked to consider cluster boxes.

My neighbors in central Florida and myself were concerned that the more wealthy suburbs of my district that are also spread out are not being asked to consider cluster boxes. And I bet you can guess what the demographic is of these two neighborhoods. These are predominantly Black neighborhoods in my district.

The Orlando postmaster has been completely nonresponsive to us and our office reaching out multiple times to ask why these two traditionally Black neighborhoods with pretty much no apartment complexes are being considered for cluster boxes so people have to walk out of their damn house to go to the box to go get their mail. I think we need to get together and talk about it. Obviously, we cannot get a meeting with the Orlando postmaster, so I want to ask both of you if you can commit to meeting with me on cluster boxes?

Ms. HULL. Sure. We are happy to.

Mr. FROST. You, too, Mr. DeJoy?

Mr. DEJOY. She said we. We are happy.

Ms. HULL. I am speaking for myself.

Mr. DEJOY. That is why I did not answer.

Mr. FROST. Yes or no, Mr. DeJoy?

Mr. DEJOY. I will meet with you.

Mr. FROST. OK. I think we need to get together on this, because it is important. The USPS is supposed to be delivering for America, and I want to make sure we are thinking about people like Richmond Heights and Carver Shores.

I want to turn to delivery for rural communities. I have a community, unincorporated mobile community in my district. As I understand it, the standard operating procedure is for mobile home communities is to either have a park office or manager distribute the mail to residents if there are not proper mailing addresses or clear delivery points. Ms. Hull, in 2022, your office looked into undelivered and partial routes.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to offer for the record the report titled "Delivery Operations: Undelivered and Partially Delivered Routes.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. FROST. The report revealed issues with a lack of internal data collection and included that, quote, "the actual number of undelivered and partially delivered routes is unknown," end quote. USPS agreed to improve on this by May 15th of next year. So, Ms. Hull, I do think this could be implemented early or needs to be. Could you share a little bit about how these target dates were chosen.

Ms. HULL. Yes. Initially I think there was some disagreement with us on the recommendation that we made as it related to those undelivered routes, and so I think we went through what we call the audit resolution process, accelerated up the chain. We got to agreement, but it took a while to get there, and so I think that is why there was a delay in the actual implementation day.

I do want to commit to you, though, that we are going to follow up on that once that action is taken, because clearly, the Postal Service intends to deliver mail to every house, every day. You have heard the postmaster general express that today. And it is very concerning to us when deliveries are not made, when actual delivery points are not serviced in that way.

Mr. FROST. I appreciate it. I look forward to meeting on cluster boxes. To put it frankly, we do not want predominantly Black communities of lower socioeconomic status being asked to consider these cluster boxes when other communities that are built in a very similar way are not being asked to consider them either. So, I look forward to talking about that, and I think this is definitely has room for oversight from your office as well.

Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes Ms. Porter from California.

Ms. PORTER. Good afternoon, Postmaster DeJoy. How many pieces of election mail did your agency handle this year?

Mr. DEJOY. About 99 million, 100 million.

Ms. PORTER. 99 million? OK. And Republicans, Democrats, Independents, we are all seeing people use mail-in ballots and they all deserve peace of mind that their ballots got delivered safely and quickly. What percentage of ballots did the Postal Service deliver within 3 days, this election cycle?

Mr. DEJOY. From voters to—from—excuse me. Are you asking me from voters to election officials?

Ms. PORTER. Yes.

Mr. DEJOY. Ninety-nine-point-five percent.

Ms. PORTER. Yes. So, we have something like 97.7, so we are in agreement that it is a really, really high number. You did a terrific job. It is impressive. I will not say anything—well, I will go ahead and say the cringe thing. Mission accomplished.

But here is the fine print. The Postal Service to do that had to do a lot of extra work, so can you say more about what kind of extraordinary measures the Postal Service had to take to deal with that influx of election mail, ballot mail and to get them delivered on time?

Mr. DEJOY. So, thank you for the question. I mean, basically, first to put it into perspective, we could be 99.5 percent on time and accurate and still lose that .5 percent, which could be 10,000 ballots, which is a huge issue in elections. So, we—the last couple days, 10 days before the election, we deploy extraordinary measures, which means a whole bunch of extra transportation between plants. It means, you know, inspections throughout our facility and work very closely with the Inspector General's team that is out there, constant meetings and review of everything that is going—everything that is going on.

And then when we get down to the post office, we actually never send a mail back to the plant. So, we did about 2 1/2 million ballots where it came into the post office, got delivered, we hand stamped it and sent it right back out, so it was delivered in less than a day. That is a very nonstandard process. That is very expensive. And it is very nerve-racking.

Ms. PORTER. So, what would make your job and the job of the hard-working people who work at the Postal Service, what would make it easier?

Mr. DEJOY. How about standard ballot box?

Ms. PORTER. Yes. Say it again for everybody in the back.

Mr. DEJOY. How about a standard ballot envelope with a bar code on it.

Ms. PORTER. A standard ballot envelope. So, one of the things those envelopes would have would be a USPS compliant bar code, which would make it easier and more quickly could scan all that. Having it clearly demarcated as a ballot, as official election mail, making sure the envelopes are not weird sizes, that the font is not weird, all of those things slow down and add to the Postal Service burden.

You have—clearly are aware, Postmaster DeJoy, of my bill called the Vote by Mail Tracking Act. It passed out of this Committee unanimously. It passed the House. It is now awaiting consideration in the Senate. And it is a bipartisan bill to make sure that all ballot envelopes meet these benchmarks. These design elements would really, really help make sure that we can get the mail—election mail delivered efficiently and quickly. You support this bill?

Mr. DEJOY. Yes. We provided the technical assistance and the design of the envelope, and so forth, and we would support it. We think it is—

Ms. PORTER. Yes. So, I really want to push the Senate to act on this bill in the remaining time. We do not need to put our Postal Service and let them—you guys are good for all weather, but we

do not need you to weather this. There are over 8,000 different election officials doing different things with ballots and with envelopes. This would focus on the envelope while still allowing local ballots to view—to be as they need to be. Senators need to hear from Americans that they want their ballots delivered quickly and that they stand with USPS in making it happen. So, please let the senators hear you on this bill.

In closing, Postmaster DeJoy, I just want to reinforce to you how strongly I support your efforts to make sure the U.S. postal police have the resources they need to keep our mail carriers safe as they are delivering more and more high—all our packages and high value packages, especially in the holiday season. I know that their safety is a top concern for you, so I want encourage you to address that. I also want to thank you and encourage you to continue to work on your efforts to deal with so-called porch pirates and package theft.

I know this is something that requires a lot of adjustments, but I think the Postal Service is really the gold standard for that and I would like to have Congress act on my Porch Pirate Act to get your competitors up to that same level of safety for packages.

Thank you so much, and I yield back.

Mr. DEJOY. Thank you.

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes Mr. Goldman.

Mr. GOLDMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you to the witnesses for being here. I have been hearing, over the last couple years, more complaints from constituents about issues with the Postal Service than probably any other issue. And the problem is significant, as I am sure you know, because it is not just letters that are delivered by mail.

It is critical documents, tax refunds, work permits, green cards, all sorts of immigration documents, and it is a significant problem. And I want to talk a little bit about that and see where we are.

My office has worked on 100 cases, approximately 100 cases of lost or stolen mail that includes passports, work permits, green cards. We have 40 open or recently closed lost check cases that represents \$3.8 million of lost—of stolen checks.

We have been able to get about \$700,000 back, but there are many checks that are stolen multiple times. I know this is a problem you are aware of and I know that you are doing what you can both on your side, Mr. DeJoy, and through the Inspector General's office.

But I would point out that New York is ranked the highest out of any state in mail theft related check fraud and New York City is the worst metro for package theft in the United States with \$945 million in losses last year.

Now, Ms. Hull, the Office of Inspector General does not regularly publicize the data on mail theft complaints submitted to the office. Can I get your commitment to audit my district, the tenth district of New York, and provide us with information on where the investigations, any of the investigations have gone?

Ms. HULL. We can definitely work with you and your staff on what we are doing in your district already. If there is a need to do some more audit work, we will work with you all on that. We have a number of complaints in New York and have worked—I think we

have about 125 open investigations related to mail theft right now in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens. So, we are doing—we do a lot of work in New York and we are happy to talk further about that.

Mr. GOLDMAN. Thank you for that. I also sent a letter about 18 months ago, in March 2023, to you, Mr. DeJoy, urging the Postal Service to increase its attention on mail theft. I got a one paragraph letter response from government relations which referred my concerns to the postal inspection service and have heard nothing since that. Since you do also oversee the postal inspection service, what more can I expect you to do on this issue?

Mr. DEJOY. When was the date of that letter, sir?

Mr. GOLDMAN. March 30, 2023.

Mr. DEJOY. About that time, we rolled out Project Safe Delivery, which are a bunch of initiatives across the country both in terms of visits into major cities like New York where we team with local prosecutors and local police departments and do, like, a raid of the city to find mail related theft, and we have—we have resulted in, you know, a lot of follow-up investigations and some arrests. We are implementing new—we have 80-year-old locks and keys. We are implementing new—

Mr. GOLDMAN. Yes. That is a whole other issue.

Mr. DEJOY. We have gotten control over our key mechanisms from the standpoint of we used to have thousands of people controlled. We are down to about 60 across the country. And we are instituting new locks, electronic smart locks, and then also dumb locks, which the digital mechanism is within the lock itself.

Mr. GOLDMAN. I think all these efforts are important. I mean, the problem is that the problem is getting worse, not better. And I do not know many more details about the project that you are describing, but this is an ongoing problem and with the Delivering for America where the service is getting worse, and costs are going up, and more mail is being stolen, you put it all together, and it is not a very good outlook.

And I fully expect to hear back from you and to coordinate with my staff and you, Ms. Hull, to determine what is going on with this mail theft and what we can do to curtail it.

Thank you very much. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The Chair now recognizes Ms. Budzinski from Illinois. Did I pronounce that right?

Ms. BUDZINSKI. You did. Thank you, Chairman, and thank you, Ranking Member Raskin, for holding this important hearing and for giving me the opportunity to waive on to this Committee for the hearing. I appreciate that. Postmaster General DeJoy and Inspector General Hull, thank you for being here and listening to the concerns that many of my colleagues are sharing regarding the recent proposed changes to the Postal Service.

I represent Champaign and Springfield processing distribution centers in Illinois. Under your Delivering for America plan, both of these facilities would be downsized and consolidated into the St. Louis and Chicago distribution centers. This means my constituents' outgoing mail would have to travel hundreds of miles, additional miles, before even being sent out to their final destinations.

With the current degree of service already substandard, these changes are just, quite frankly, unacceptable.

This is an even more concerning—this is even more concerning given the findings in Inspector General Hull's report following the implementation of these changes in Richmond, Virginia, which found that these changes, quote, "contributed to a decrease in service performance for the Richmond region that continued 4 months after the launch."

So, my first question is to Postmaster General DeJoy. Can you promise my constituents in central Illinois that they will not see declines in on-time mail performance if there is a change in operation at the Champaign and Springfield distribution centers? And I would really appreciate just a simple yes or no.

Mr. DEJOY. They will not experience what we experienced in Richmond.

Ms. BUDZINSKI. So, no, they will not.

Mr. DEJOY. They will not experience—

Ms. BUDZINSKI. Additional delays. OK. That is encouraging. Postmaster General DeJoy, the Champaign processing and distribution center also employs over 200 career and pre-career postal employees and the Springfield processing and distribution center employs over 170 workers. According to the mail processing facility review, there is expected to be a net loss of over 100 employees at the Champaign processing and distribution center and over 30 at the Springfield processing and distribution center.

How are you ensuring that all of these employees are provided with other employment opportunities given that there will be no processing and distribution centers in central Illinois following these changes?

Mr. DEJOY. I do not—if you got that data out of a filing that we had, the intent of the plan, No. 1, is to also bring other type of—if we, in fact, make that move for that particular—those particular locations, we will be also driving package delivery business into that location. So, our intent is that people will have jobs in those particular areas. We will work with attrition. We have a lot of attrition at the Postal Service, and we will work through attrition.

I have also got to go back. Some of these locations we are evaluating with regard to the new 3661 we just filed and they may or may not be continuing in that direction. That was a big study we did to try and get our hands around where do we get savings from? But I can follow up with you on that if that is—if one of the—people are going to be OK.

Ms. BUDZINSKI. Yes, I think that is one of my bigger concerns is employees and making sure that they can stay within their areas that they are working, and that is the true commitment that they have, that they do not have to be concerned about their employment situation.

Mr. DEJOY. We are very, very—I have been very, very committed to that since I walked in the door to make the right moves as we are taking this transition so people feel secure in their jobs, which is why we converted a lot of people to full-time.

Ms. BUDZINSKI. OK. I also wanted to talk about, Postmaster General DeJoy, your regional transportation optimization plan as well. As you know, if enacted, this plan would limit the number of times

post offices located more than 50 miles away from a regional processing and distribution center have their outgoing mail picked up to just one time per day.

The Postal Service has admitted that these changes will create up to 24 hours of additional delays for predominantly rural regions, and that is particularly the region that I represent in down-state Illinois. In the third quarter of the last fiscal year, on-time delivery rates for three to 5 day first-class mail in down-state Illinois was only 68 percent. Given that one-third of my constituents are already getting their mail late, how can you justify further delaying their mail simply because they do not live within a 50-mile area of a larger city?

Mr. DEJOY. Well, we need to—we need to reshape the Postal Service, because we are losing a lot of money. There was 59 billion pieces of single piece first-class mail in 1999. There is less than 12 now, and it is going down. What I will say, in this plan, right now we have trucks going out in the morning empty and coming back empty, then going back at night empty and coming back empty.

What we are proposing in this new plan for those further areas, we go out and deliver and pick up the mail at the same time. Then we will accelerate it through the system.

Ninety percent of the mail throughout the Nation, especially on delivery, delivery going into these areas, will be accelerated. It is just the pickup of single piece first-class mail that will be delayed tops 24 hours in a one—so it is 2-day might go to 3-day, 3-day might go to 4-day, 4-day might go to 5-day, but nothing is going beyond the 5-days, because we will fly it or do something else.

I think it is a—all these decisions are tough. Where do we get that we can stop tens of thousands of trucks running around empty throughout the Nation by doing this? And we—and some of these areas, like your area, where it is remote, but it has got population and has package business in and out, we articulate the worst of the situation. I think there is some other opportunities for those—

Ms. BUDZINSKI. Yes. And I know I am out of time. I just want to say that these changes cannot be made on the backs of rural America, and that is my very big concern, that the focus is on these urban cities, these big cities, at the detriment and at the loss of services for rural parts of our country. That is a very big concern. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentlelady's time has expired. That concludes all of our questions, and I want to thank our witnesses for being here today, for your testimony.

Ranking Member Raskin and I are going to yield—are going to skip closing statements in lieu of votes being called a couple of minutes ago, but we had several Members, I know Ms. Norton and Ms. Crockett that had additional questions that we are going to send you.

Ms. Hull, I know we have questions for you as well. As you can see, everyone cares about the Postal Service. We want to see the Postal Service be successful and efficient, so we will be in touch with you and I am sure we will have lots of more communication this next Congress.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Chair, could I just do a UC requests?

Chairman COMER. Yes.

Mr. RASKIN. Let us see. Several here. I ask unanimous consent to enter into the record the statement from Chuck Mulidore, the Executive VP of the National Association of Postal Supervisors; a statement from Kevin Yoder at Keep Us Posted; and a statement from Marie Hobson Clarke from the Envelope Manufacturer's Association providing comments on the status of the Postal Service.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. RASKIN. And I would like to ask UC to enter into the record a report from MDP Analytics dated March 24—

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. RASKIN. And unanimous consent to enter into the record a submission from the U.S. Postal Service to the Postal Regulatory Commission including Fiscal Year performance targets for each market dominant product. And finally, a request to enter into the record this May 11, 2022, letter from former Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney to Mr. DeJoy that she sent following the Committee's April 4 hearing on the postal service's electric vehicle procurement, which highlights the postal service's original analysis of the costs and benefits of EVs, underestimated cost savings from EVs, and used outdated gas prices.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Chairman COMER. With that, and without objection, all Members will have five legislative days within which to submit materials and submit additional written questions for the witnesses, which we will have, and we will forward those to you all for your response.

If there is no further business, without objection, the Committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:34 p.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

