

August 18, 2020

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE), I write to express serious concerns with recent changes in United States Postal Service (USPS) operations that threaten substantial delivery delays, and to urge support for legislation to ensure an adequate level of service to the American people.

Americans rely on the Postal Service to deliver life-saving prescription medications and essential goods and communications. In some cases, delivery delayed is delivery denied, as it could force individuals to forego delivery in the future or receive medications or goods too late to use for critical needs. For seniors, especially those with preexisting medical conditions, quarantining for safety, a trip to the pharmacy, store or polling site could unnecessarily expose them to greater risk of infection from COVID-19. While the Postmaster General may be measuring service cuts in terms of dollars saved, Americans may measure them in services, or even lives, lost.

The recent USPS operational changes threaten to cause substantial delays in mail delivery, and have already done so, based on significant anecdotal evidence and expert opinion. Internal Postal Service documents indicate policies to eliminate overtime and restrict the number of deliveries by curtailing late or extra trips, resulting in mail left behind on the workroom floor or docks, undelivered at the end of the day. For our tens of thousands of current and former postal employee members, this is practically unheard of and antithetical to the ethic of service adhered to by those who contributed their careers to USPS. Furthermore, based on letters from the USPS General Counsel to both Congress and the states, NARFE is concerned that the Postal Service is abandoning its practice of treating all election mail as First-Class mail. Doing so could make it more difficult for citizens to receive, and/or more costly for states to send, absentee ballots in a timely manner. That could weaken the ability of citizens to vote from home, a more significant issue amidst the ongoing pandemic.

It is called the Postal **Service** for a reason. It is not a business designed to make a profit, and cost-cutting efforts that undermine the universal service provided to the American people run counter to the USPS mission and purpose.

For these reasons, I urge you to support legislation to ensure the Postal Service reverses the recent operational changes and provides an adequate level of service to the American people. This week, the House will vote on H.R. 8015, the Delivering for America Act, to prohibit the recent changes and ensure pre-pandemic service levels. NARFE urges all members of Congress to support the bill.

NARFE also continues to urge Congress to pass emergency appropriations for USPS to ensure financial viability without decreased service. Such funds would be provided by provisions of H.R. 6800, the Heroes Act, which passed the House, and a bipartisan

Senate measure, S. 4147, the Postal Emergency Assistance Act, among other bills. We urge swift passage by both chambers of adequate funding. Congress must make the financial commitment to ensure this cherished institution endures. There should be no excuse, however weak, for the current service cuts.

The Postal Service provides a vital lifeline linking communities and delivering essential goods and communications throughout this crisis. During this time of economic uncertainty and unprecedented challenge for every American, we can ill afford the demise of USPS.

Thank you for the consideration of our views. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact NARFE's Staff Vice President for Policy and Programs Jessica Klement at jklement@narfe.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Thomas', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ken Thomas
NARFE National President