

Testimony of Congressman C.A. Dutch Ruppertsberger
House Committee on Oversight and Reform
Subcommittee on Government Operations
Waiting on the Mail: Postal Service Standard Drops in Baltimore and
the Surrounding Area Hearing
February 14, 2022

Chairman Connolly and members of the Subcommittee, I want to thank you for putting this field hearing together here in Baltimore, my hometown.

In over 19 years in Congress, I have never received complaints of this magnitude about the mail. Many of my constituents have gone weeks without receiving their mail – including paychecks and life-saving prescriptions. Mail problems are a challenge for Members of Congress because we lack jurisdiction.

As you know, the USPS is an independent agency under the Executive Branch – they are not funded by Congress, nor do they answer to Congress. So, while options are extremely limited, my office and I have adopted an “all of the above” strategy to deal with the volume of complaints.

I have sent multiple letters outlining the severity of mail delivery delays plaguing constituents in my district to Postmaster General DeJoy. The Postmaster General has thus far failed to address my request to meet with a member of his staff. Instead, I received a response from a government relations representative that contained a litany of excuses, finger-pointing and faulty logic that failed to address why there is such a disparity of service levels across the country, within the state of Maryland and throughout my district.

I have been meeting regularly with local leadership including Postmaster Gilbert who you will hear from today and have demanded solutions at press conferences. Finally, I requested the U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General (OIG) step in and audit the most problematic post offices in my district. The results were un-surprising.

The audit found the Baltimore region has the second highest number of missing mail inquiries in the country, many product categories never met their service target during the three-month audit period and 42% of packages were improperly scanned. It’s mind-boggling.

While worsened by the pandemic, Post Office issues were clearly deteriorating before covid. They are the result of poor planning and oversight by Postmaster General DeJoy and senior Postal leadership, who have unilaterally rolled-out the “Delivering For America” plan despite widespread concerns, lowered service standards and increased prices. All while Headquarters gave themselves unprecedented raises and bonuses. I ask for unanimous consent to enter into the record a letter I sent last week to Postmaster General DeJoy further outlining my concerns.

Mr. Chairman, I am eager to work with this committee to put the Post Office back on a sustainable path and restore mail service to the level our constituents deserve. Thank you for this opportunity and I yield back.

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