

United States Senate

August 08, 2020

The Honorable Louis DeJoy
Postmaster General
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington, DC 20260

Dear Postmaster General DeJoy,

I write to urge you to reverse recent policies impacting delivery times and to call your attention to concerns raised by my constituents. Montanans from across the state have contacted me to express their alarm by these orders, including your July 10, 2020 directive to hold late mail until the next day, and the resulting delays in mail delivery. This action, if not rescinded, will negatively impact mail delivery for Montanans and unacceptably increase the risk of late prescriptions, commercial products, or bill delivery.

The USPS is critical to Montanans, especially our seniors, veterans, and rural communities across the Treasure State. Last year alone, the Postal Service delivered 1.9 billion prescriptions to American's mailboxes, and nearly 100 percent of all Veterans Affairs prescriptions. To avoid digging out of backlogged mail, which has been a consistent challenge in my state, I urge you to reverse the mail hold component of the July 10 directive

It is often said that there are two seasons in Montana: construction and winter. For many, the unforgiving climate and terrain paired with the shortage of pharmacies makes the continuity of USPS an existential necessity. Furthermore, countless small businesses depend on their letter carriers and post offices to get their products to market. Towns like Vida and Victor are built around their Post Office. Ismay, which is home to fewer than 20 residents and was made famous by unofficially renaming itself Joe, Montana for the Kansas City Chiefs Quarterback in 1993, was devastated when a fire destroyed their USPS facility this past January.

As you know, I am a strong advocate for the mission of the USPS and I would like to commend the unwavering commitment of its managers, handlers, and carriers throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Americans have endured months of hardship and loss, but while the county was shuttered, the USPS remained open. Much has changed for the USPS in navigating new pressures and unforeseen challenges, which is why I am working to secure relief for your agency through the Postal Service Emergency Assistance Act. In conjunction with my colleagues, I am working to include this measure in the next COVID-19 relief package currently under negotiation. Furthermore, I have introduced the USPS Fairness Act to repeal the unfair Retiree Health Benefit Fund prefunding mandate which has hindered the agency's success. Ensuring that the USPS is on a sustainable fiscal path while maintaining high quality of service to Montana and all Americans is critically important, which is why I am concerned about the impact of the July 10 delayed mail directive and request you rescind that element of the policy.

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to working with you to optimize the USPS operations on behalf of the millions of Americans who depend on the agency's continued reliable service.

Sincerely,



STEVE DAINES
United States Senator