

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 15, 2024

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

Re: Grand Junction, Colorado Processing and Distribution Center Consolidation

Dear Postmaster General DeJoy,

The United States Postal Service (USPS) plays a particularly important role in rural communities across America where residents rely heavily on mail parcels, including prescription medication and medical equipment, election materials, and bills. While we appreciate USPS's efforts to improve mail delivery systems through the Delivering for America plan, we have serious questions regarding the recent proposal to consolidate Processing and Distribution Centers (P&DC), including changing the Grand Junction Processing and Distribution Center (GJ P&DC) to a Local Processing Center (LPC), and to transport local mail with a local destination, over 500 miles round trip, between Grand Junction and Denver for sorting.

We request more information regarding these changes and seek to ensure they do not increase mail delivery speeds or add to existing workforce challenges. Please carefully consider the following feedback, and provide the requested information to ensure transparency throughout the ongoing review process.

Mail Processing Concerns

USPS's proposal to redirect local mail from Grand Junction to Denver has raised concerns from several municipal leaders across Colorado's Western Slope. During the winter and spring, the I-70 corridor often experiences delayed travel due to hazardous winter conditions and mudslides. We are concerned that USPS's plan could impact local mail delivery when these delays occur, which is alarming when constituents already suffer from inconsistent and unreliable mail service.

Further, we are concerned that the decision to route additional local mail to the Denver facility from other population centers in Wyoming and Nebraska could exacerbate mail distribution

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

issues in the region and contribute to further delays and inconsistencies in the Denver P&DC facility. USPS's Office of the Inspector General's (OIG's) 2021 audit already identified several processing and delivery inconsistencies in the Denver facility.¹ Given that USPS's new plan will transport even more mail into and out of the Denver P&DC facility, we seek a better understanding of the investments and improvements to be made to the Denver facility and the timeline for their completion.

Workforce Concerns

In addition, we know that this plan, if implemented, will impact Colorado's workforce. While we trust that the changes under this plan will help USPS to remain nimble and competitive with their delivery service peers, we want to make sure that these plans are not disruptive to existing efforts to strengthen Colorado's rural USPS workforce. We encourage USPS to identify ways to maximize on-ramps for non-career staff to transition to career staff positions through this plan. We also look forward to partnering with USPS's Chief Human Resources Officer to identify long-term strategies to promote workforce recruitment and retention, including providing payment increases, as recommended in the recent USPS OIG report.

Conclusion

We understand that USPS's decision to shift to a model that consolidates distribution centers is the result of a larger USPS review of all its facilities and equipment with the dual goal to cut costs and ensure resources are maximized. However, it is critical that mail service is not compromised in the process and the outcomes are sustainable for rural communities over the long term. We stand ready to help amplify information about these plans in the future. We also request that you answer the following questions to assist us in providing the best information to constituents.

- 1) Has USPS outlined specific contingency plans to help workers from the various local processing centers safely navigate the routes to and from Denver in the event of inclement weather or other road hazards?
- 2) How is USPS planning to overcome weather-related delays given regular inclement weather and other road hazards?
- 3) How many households and businesses are currently served by the Grand Junction and Denver processing and delivery facilities? How many additional households will Denver serve under this new plan, including the households in Wyoming and Nebraska?

¹ <https://www.uspsoug.gov/reports/audit-reports/mail-operations-denver-co-processing-and-distribution-center>

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

- 4) What specific measures are USPS considering to help make sure the Denver facility is adequately staffed to accommodate the new incoming mail?
- 5) What training will USPS provide personnel, including contractors and managers, if these plans are implemented, to ensure proper logistical processes are in place and to make sure workers maintain proper record keeping as the mail is transported between the local and regional facilities?
- 6) How is USPS planning to ensure that there are no career-staff layoffs? Additionally, is USPS considering plans to help mitigate non-career staff turnover?

Thank you in advance for considering our feedback and answering our questions. We are monitoring this development closely. We look forward to staying in contact as you consider whether to implement the proposed plans and working with you to ensure that every Coloradan receives their mail in a timely manner.

Sincerely,



John Hickenlooper
United States Senator



Michael Bennet
United States Senator