

## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES:  
APPROPRIATIONS  
COMMERCE  
HEALTH, EDUCATION,  
LABOR, AND PENSIONS

September 17, 2024

Mr. Louis DeJoy  
Postmaster General and Chief Executive Officer  
United States Postal Service  
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW  
Room 4012  
Washington, DC 20260

Dear Postmaster General DeJoy:

I write to you again to express my deep frustrations regarding your Delivering for America plan and the future of the United States Postal Service (USPS), this time to underscore the unacceptable impact it is having on local newspapers and their readers in Wisconsin and across the country. Local newspapers work hard every day and week to deliver news on a timely basis to readers in their communities. While USPS has consistently raised rates for local newspapers, service has not improved, and these newspapers are instead receiving unprecedented calls from their customers about mail delays.

Despite your promise that the Delivering for America plan would modernize and transform the Postal Service, your policies are merely diminishing the quality of customer service and creating significant mail delays, including for rural newspaper delivery. I have written to USPS leadership repeatedly requesting a reevaluation of your policies, including the shortage of USPS staff in Wisconsin, the delays in mail caused by the Local Transportation Optimization policy, and the postal rate price increases. While these issues persist, further concerns with USPS service under your leadership have been brought to my attention by local newspapers in Wisconsin.

The Iron County Miner, a 139-year-old newspaper in Hurley, Wisconsin historically mails over 1,100 newspapers every week. They spend thousands of dollars a month on postage with the USPS to deliver their newspapers, only to be met with an unprecedented number of complaints due to delayed delivery under the Delivering for America plan. The Mellen Weekly Record, a newspaper in Mellen, Wisconsin, spends over \$4,000 a month with USPS. Over the past few years, The Record has heard from subscribers less than 30 miles away that their newspapers have been delivered two to four weeks late. Both The Miner and The Record have seen a drastic decline in the renewal of subscriptions by their customers, primarily due to the unreliability of receiving USPS delivery service.

The Lakeland Times, a newspaper located in Minocqua, Wisconsin has over 3,500 subscribers and spends over \$11,000 monthly, or \$132,000 a year, on mail delivery. Due to mail delays caused, in part, by the closure of the Wausau mail processing facility, The Times estimates it has

lost nearly 500 subscribers and \$100,000 from subscription cancellations over the past four years. The Times staff members spend a significant amount of their time answering complaints from frustrated subscribers and are forced to do USPS's job by driving to local post offices to avoid mail processing facilities and better ensure the timely delivery of their newspaper.

Local newspapers, who have been relying on the USPS for decades to deliver newspapers to their customers, are struggling under your Delivering for America plan. The FY24 USPS Office of Inspector General (OIG) Service Performance Report confirms these frustrations. According to the report, Wisconsin is ranked almost last in both FY2024 Q3 Two-Day delivery and the Three-to-Five Day delivery.<sup>1</sup> You recently announced further potential cuts in rural areas, including fully implementing the Local Transportation Optimization policy.<sup>2</sup> Already, since the implementations of your policies, from 2023 to 2024, Wisconsin's Two-Day Delivery Service Performance dropped from 91.5 percent delivered on time to 70.5 percent, and our Three-to-Five Day Delivery Service Performance dropped from 86.2 percent delivered on time to 67.9 percent.<sup>3</sup> Wisconsinites and their businesses, including local news, cannot afford further cuts by USPS leadership, nor the implementation of additional disastrous policies.

I am calling on you, as the Postmaster General, to reverse course on the Delivering for American plan and ensure that USPS service is reliable, including for rural newspaper delivery. We all have a vested interest in seeing the USPS succeed. My constituents depend on the USPS for their daily correspondence, bills, lifesaving medications and, in many cases, their livelihood. I urge you to fulfill your responsibilities to support and serve small businesses and rural communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this urgent request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tammy Baldwin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senator

---

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General. "Service Performance." FY24 Q3. Accessible at: <https://www.uspsoidg.gov/focus-areas/service-performance>

<sup>2</sup> Bogage, Jacob. "Postal Service considers rural mail slowdown after election." *The Washington Post*, 22 August 2024. Accessible at: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2024/08/22/usps-mail-slowdown-election/>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.