

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 5, 2023

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

Postmaster General DeJoy:

We urge the United States Postal Service (USPS) to delay implementation of the Rural Route Evaluated Compensation System (RRECS), an automated system that will determine rural letter carrier pay, until the system's serious flaws are rectified. We also request additional information about how the USPS will address its lack of transparency about the system, inadequate training for carriers using the system, and how USPS will reimburse rural carriers for lost earnings when the system makes an inaccurate determination about their routes.

We understand RRECS will reduce the pay of 66% of carriers significantly, and for nearly 14,000 carriers, those cuts will exceed 8 hours of pay a week. As you know, rural letter carriers travel millions of miles every day to provide an essential service for the hundreds of thousands of families and businesses in rural and suburban areas of our states. Rural letter carriers helped our rural communities weather the COVID-19 pandemic by delivering prescription medications, books and bills, essential health care items and more to every door. The sacrifices made by these essential workers during the pandemic should not be met with rushed implementation of an untested new compensation system.

We understand the need to update the rural letter carrier route evaluation system and ensure that rural carriers are compensated for labor that has gone unaccounted for under the current system. However, RRECS is not narrowly tailored to address these problems and is reportedly rife with glaring flaws in its implementation and training for its adoption. RRECS imposes an intense system of worker surveillance on rural carriers that requires them to log every tiny task of their daily routes using devices that frequently malfunction. Rural carriers report that they have not received proper training on how to ensure they are logging their work correctly, or what the end results of those logs mean.

Implementing RRECS in its current form will arbitrarily enact a pay cut for tens of thousands rural postal workers who still lack a formal dispute process and have a history of delayed back pay from the postal service. Furthermore, USPS has withheld information about how RRECS has made its initial route evaluations, leading the National Rural Letter Carriers Association to file a grievance with USPS this March. Worker surveillance systems that use automated

processes to increase worker efficiency in warehouses and the trucking industry have been shown to lead to lower workplace safety, and increase stress and anxiety on the job. Like RRECS, these systems have been promoted as being for the benefit of workers, despite clear evidence to the contrary.

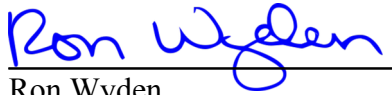
We understand that the decision to build RRECS was not made unilaterally by USPS, but it is critical that USPS fixes the known issues with the system before implementation. In the longer-term, we urge USPS to work with rural letter carriers to reduce the system's impact on carrier working conditions. At a time when USPS is struggling to deliver mail to rural areas, due in part to an inability to recruit rural letter carriers, we fear that RRECS' impact on working conditions and pay will further deteriorate a vital service to our rural communities.

In addition to delaying RRECS implementation, we request answers to the following questions:

- 1) Will USPS commit to sharing data requested by the National Rural Letter Carrier Association to validate that RRECS is correctly evaluating carrier routes?
- 2) Will USPS commit to providing rural carriers fast, effective, and transparent means to dispute and correct inaccurate data about their routes by the time RRECS is implemented?
- 3) If such a dispute and correction mechanism reveals that a route has been incorrectly assessed by RRECS, resulting in lost pay for a rural carrier, will USPS commit to making retroactive payment for any wages owed within 30 days?
- 4) Will USPS make public justifications for how and why time standards for daily tasks have been shortened in RRECS from their prior time allotment under the existing system, and offer carriers the ability to challenge those standards so that they reflect how long each task takes in practice?
- 5) How does RRECS accommodate workers with disabilities who may need more time than the system allows to complete daily route activities?
- 6) What steps is USPS taking to ensure that issues with Mobile Delivery Device scanner flaws are addressed, including that the scanners often lose signal in large buildings and rural areas?
- 7) What steps is USPS taking to ensure that when carriers service a Cluster Box Unit their time and activities are properly taken into account by RRECS?
- 8) What additional training is USPS prepared to offer carriers and managers to ensure their routes are properly evaluated by RRECS?
- 9) Will USPS guarantee that the presence of monitoring technologies will not extend beyond the scope of what has been mandated for the implementation of RRECS?
- 10) What steps is USPS taking to improve recruitment and retention of letter carriers to ensure that delivery of critical mail like medicine and disability payments are not significantly delayed in rural communities?

Thank you for prompt attention to this serious matter. Our staffs are available to discuss further at your convenience.

Sincerely,



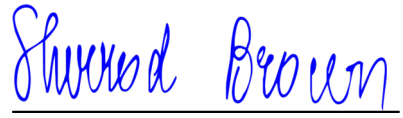
Ron Wyden
United States Senator



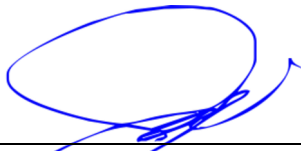
Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



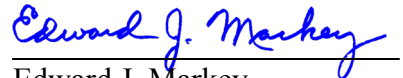
Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



John Fetterman
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator