

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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

February 12, 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 Mr. DeJoy:

I write to express my concerns regarding ongoing and proposed operational changes to the United States Postal Service (USPS). I am requesting additional information about the Optimized Collections Initiative and the program's rollout in Wisconsin.

In April 2023, the USPS released its "Delivering for America" second-year progress report, which included plans to transition selected collection routes from "traditional" to "optimized." These changes are described by USPS as necessary to address inefficiencies in transportation and collection networks. In a USPS document submitted to the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) on November 22, 2023, USPS indicated that it would implement optimized collections in Wisconsin—including in Madison, Green Bay, and Milwaukee.¹ These changes include "Full Optimization" and "Hybrid-Optimized" collection routes, which mean that rather than being picked up at the end of each day, mail will be picked up the following morning. According to this same document, "the analytical process for Madison, Green Bay, and Milwaukee, WI is still ongoing."²

USPS has a record of significant delays of delivering mail in Wisconsin, and I am concerned that these changes will further exacerbate delivery issues in the state. At a time when the USPS is raising postage rates and losing mail volume, it is difficult to understand why you are taking further steps that will reduce the mail services that U.S. families and businesses deserve. The Postal Service is vital for small businesses, seniors, and rural communities that rely on the prompt delivery of life-saving medications, bill payments, and other time sensitive pieces of mail. In order to understand these proposed changes, I ask that you provide a full explanation of

¹ PRC, <https://prc.arkcase.com/portal/docket-search/advanced/filing-details/127189>, 4.

² PRC, <https://prc.arkcase.com/portal/docket-search/advanced/filing-details/127189>, 6.

“Optimized Collections” in Wisconsin, including implementation timeline for the initiative and a list affected Postal Service facilities. Please also respond to the following questions:

- How will USPS ensure that businesses and individuals who utilize affected post offices are informed about these changes?
- Will USPS customers, including those in rural communities, receive a different level of service or otherwise experience delays in service due to these changes?
- Has USPS concluded their analyses of the Madison, Green Bay, and Milwaukee areas for the Optimized Local Transportation (OLT)? If so, please share the findings. If not, why has USPS proceeded with implementing the program?
- Did you consult with businesses that rely on USPS delivery before making these changes?
- How will USPS ensure that mail has a postmark that correctly reflects the day when an individual drops their mail off?
- How will USPS ensure that mail-in ballots for upcoming elections are not impacted by this change?

Your attention to this important issue is deeply appreciated and I respectfully request a response by March 12, 2024. I look forward to your response.

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