

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 6, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-230, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-221, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, and Leader McCarthy:

We commend your leadership as Congress continues to provide resources and assistance to those negatively impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. We are writing to urge you to include in the next legislative vehicle relating to this crisis funding and resources the United States Postal Service needs to survive and maintain operations.

On March 23, 2020, the Chairs of several House Committees introduced H.R. 6379, the Take Responsibility for Workers and Families Act, with more than \$2.5 trillion to assist the American people. Included in that legislation were several provisions that would have provided the Postal Service with emergency funding crucial to its ability to maintain operations and support its half a million employees. Specifically, H.R. 6379 provided:

- \$25 billion in emergency funding;
- The elimination of outstanding debt owed to the Department of the Treasury;
- Authorization to borrow up to \$15 billion from the Treasury; and
- Prioritization of the delivery of medical supplies pursuant to the National Emergency declared by President Trump under the Stafford Act on March 13, 2020.

Unfortunately, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act did not include any emergency funding for the Postal Service. Instead, it allowed the Postal Service to borrow up to an additional \$10 billion subject to terms agreed to by the Department of the Treasury and the Postal Service.

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Increased lending authority is insufficient to ensure that the Postal Service can continue to operate. One Postal Service estimate shows that the additional borrowing authority would enable it to operate only through the end of this summer. As the coronavirus continues to worsen, the Postal Service projects a possible 50% decline in mail volume between now and the end of the current fiscal year.¹

In contrast, the CARES Act provided \$50 billion in grants and loans, including payroll support, to passenger air carriers.² According to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, the U.S. airline industry had 452,668 full time employees in 2019, meaning that the Act provided the airline industry with the equivalent of more than \$110,000 per employee.³ That would amount to more than \$68 billion if applied to the Postal Service's 620,000 employees who face an uncertain future.

If Congress recognizes that the Postal Service is as critical to the American economy and infrastructure as the passenger airline industry, the Postal Service would have been provided \$68 billion rather than just a fraction of that in borrowing authority that does not even result in a guaranteed loan from the Department of the Treasury.

While the House of Representatives develops additional legislative solutions to support our nation's economy and help it recover from the effects of this public health crisis, we remind you that the Postal Service is vital to America's economic recovery from this global health crisis and should no longer be left out of coronavirus relief legislation. National mail delivery plays a critical role in the American economy that is too often overlooked.

The Postal Service is more critical to our nation's success than ever. The Postal Service will provide Americans the ability to vote in the upcoming presidential election. In the 2018

¹ Briefing by U.S. Postal Service, to Staff, Committee on Oversight and Reform (Mar. 16, 2020).

² Department of the Treasury, *Guidelines and Application Procedures for Payroll Support to Air Carriers and Contractors under Division A, Title IV, Subtitle B of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act* (Mar. 30, 2020) (online at <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/Guidelines%20and%20Procedures%20for%20Payroll%20Support%20to%20Air%20Carriers%20and%20Contractors.pdf>); Department of the Treasury, *Procedures and Minimum Requirements for Loans to Air Carriers and Eligible Businesses and National Security Businesses under Division A, Title IV, Subtitle A of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act* (Mar. 30, 2020) (online at <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/Procedures%20and%20Minimum%20Requirements%20for%20Loans.pdf>).

³ Department of Transportation, *November 2019 U.S. Passenger Airline Employment Data* (Jan. 21, 2020) (online at www.bts.dot.gov/newsroom/november-2019-us-passenger-airline-employment-data).

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midterm elections, nearly 26% of citizens voted through vote-by-mail options.⁴ Voting-by-mail will likely grow in the coming election, particularly for the elderly, those with underlying health conditions, and Americans who wish to avoid large crowds at polling locations. Without a fully functioning Postal Service, vote-by-mail options will be degraded in November.

Postal workers are on the frontlines of this crisis, delivering essential information, packages, and services to the American people. We cannot afford to lose this massive infrastructure, with access to every resident and business in the country.

To ensure the long-term viability of the Postal Service, we ask that the next stimulus package include the \$25 billion in direct appropriations and debt relief that were included in the Take Responsibility for Workers and Families Act as well as the following measures:

- Authorization of appropriations of up to \$250 million per year to cover unfunded mandates, including the cost of paid parental and family leave;
- A requirement that postal employees enroll in Medicare, which would provide significant long-term reductions in retiree health care costs; and
- Allowing the Postal Service to conduct more non-postal business, particularly with state and local governments.

Thank you for your efforts and assistance in this matter. We look forward to working with you to take the necessary steps to ensure the solvency and continuation of our Postal Service. If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Committee staff at (202) 225-5051.

Sincerely,



Carolyn B. Maloney
Chairwoman
Committee on Oversight and Reform
Operations



Gerald E. Connolly
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government

⁴ Election Assistance Commission, *Election Administration and Voting Survey: 2018 Comprehensive Report* (June 2019) (online at www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/eac_assets/1/6/2018_EAVS_Report.pdf).

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Stephen F. Lynch
Chairman
Subcommittee on National Security



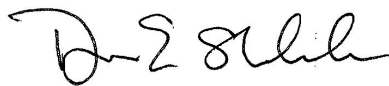
Brenda L. Lawrence
Member of Congress



A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress



Andy Levin
Member of Congress



Donna Shalala
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Jody Hice, Ranking Member,
Subcommittee on National Security