

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

February 4, 2021

Dr. Wendy McIlwain
Acting District Manager
United States Postal Service
900 Brentwood Road NE
Washington, DC 20066

Dear Dr. McIlwain:

As members of the Maryland Congressional Delegation, we write today with regard to the serious, persistent mail delivery delays in the Capital District. These problems have not subsided since the end of the holiday season – in fact we have heard increasingly urgent stories from more and more constituents throughout the past month. Packages have been delayed while mail has been delivered to the wrong addresses or not delivered at all.

At a time when so many Marylanders are already experiencing financial hardship, these problems are leading to the imposition of improper late fees after bills are delayed in the mail. The delivery of essential checks, including economic impact payments, has also been affected. Based on direct constituent outreach as well as an enclosed letter to the Maryland Congressional Delegation from the Maryland State Medical Society dated January 25, 2021, we understand that delays in the delivery of pharmaceuticals are having a “devastating effect... on patient care.” Municipal governments in our state are constrained in their ability to provide essential services by late receipt of revenue through the postal service. Finally, these delays are impeding the ability of Maryland small businesses to continue to operate at a time when they are already facing serious challenges.

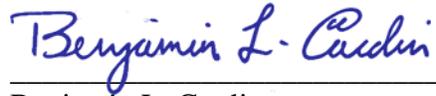
We understand that these delays are not unique to the Capital District and that like other districts nationwide, you are facing both elevated demand and staffing challenges resulting from the accelerated spread of COVID-19 in our region. Based on our conversations with representatives of postal unions and employees in Maryland, we are also aware that many of the operational changes pursued by Postmaster General Louis DeJoy contribute to the delays.

Recognizing the importance of reliable mail delivery during a global pandemic last spring, Congress provided \$10 billion in funding in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to help the United States Postal Service (USPS) cover the costs of responding to COVID-19. More recently, the December COVID-19 relief and omnibus bill converted that loan authority to a grant. We are committed to working with you to restore reliable postal service as soon as possible. Understanding the nature and causes of the current situation would be a first step in that direction. To that end, we respectfully request responses to the following questions by Friday, February 12, 2021.

1. What is the volume of backlogged mail that currently exists within your processing facilities?
2. When do you expect to restore regular service standards for new mail and to be current on the backlog of mail?
3. What percentage of First-Class mail was delivered on time during the following months:
 - a. October 2020
 - b. November 2020
 - c. December 2020
 - d. January 2021
4. What, if any, priority is being given to any particular classes of mail that may account for continued delivery of mass mailings but delays on First-Class mail?
5. Beyond the causes outlined above, are there other reasons for the delays in the Capital District that we should be aware of?
6. How many branch offices or processing center(s) in your district have had one or more employees absent due to COVID-19 within the past two months?

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to receiving your response.

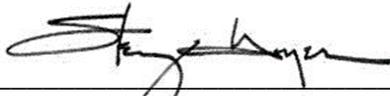
Sincerely,



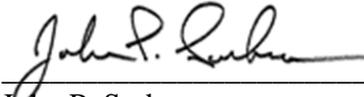
Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



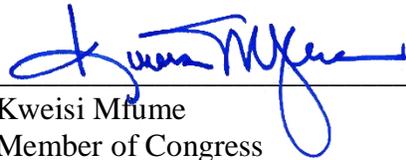
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Steny H. Hoyer
Member of Congress



John P. Sarbanes
Member of Congress



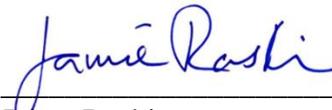
Kweisi Mfume
Member of Congress



Andy Harris, M.D.
Member of Congress



Anthony G. Brown
Member of Congress



Jaime Raskin
Member of Congress



David Trone
Member of Congress