

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 14, 2023

Mr. Louis DeJoy
Postmaster General
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Room 10300
Washington, DC 20260

Dear Postmaster Louis DeJoy,

We are writing to express our concerns regarding the U.S. Postal Service's ongoing Mail Processing Facility Review (MPFR) of the Wilmington Processing and Distribution Center (P&DC) under the 10-year Delivering for America plan. As the MPFR's recommendations are finalized, the Postal Service must do right by Delaware: minimizing staffing reductions, addressing impacts to affected workers and proactively preventing any deterioration of service.

The Wilmington P&DC is the largest mail processing and distribution facility in the state, and we are pleased to see that USPS' initial findings support keeping this critical facility open. However, we are disappointed to learn that the initial findings of the MPFR recommend a reduction of jobs in Delaware, and are concerned that the facility's transition to a Local Processing Center (LPC) could result in service disruptions and negative effects on the local workforce. Further, we question whether USPS' facility review truly shows that this is the best course of action, given the inconsistent and nonspecific answers that we and the public have received.

The loss of the only P&DC in Delaware would have a negative impact on our constituents and leave our state at a competitive disadvantage. Based on the information that has been provided to us, the rationale behind this operational shift is unclear, as is the full scope of potential impacts on Delaware's postal services. While we understand the need for USPS to improve operational efficiencies, this should not come at the cost of Delaware jobs and disruptions to service standards. We were proud to support the Postal Service Reform Act of 2022 (PL 117-108) because we know the importance of USPS to Delaware communities and ensuring the Postal Service meets the challenges and needs of our modern economy. As USPS modernizes this facility, we urge the Postal Service to ensure this process minimizes short- and long-term disruption to mail service and delivery. Delawareans have already experienced widespread delays and disruptions in mail service in recent years, and any backsliding is unacceptable.

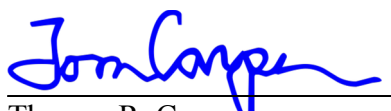
As you know, on August 10, 2022, we wrote to you expressing our concern and alarm at widespread service disruption across the Delaware-Pennsylvania 2 Postal District. Since then, the USPS Office of the Inspector General conducted an audit of the Wilmington P&DC as well as three delivery units serviced by this P&DC. The Inspector General's report specifically identified deficiencies related to delayed mail, load scans, truck and trailer safety, and security procedures at the Wilmington P&DC.

Due to these recent challenges, we are particularly concerned that the initial findings of the MPFR calls for a reduction of 19 craft and 4 management positions. The initial findings also reference potential reassignments for career postal workers. In our previous engagement with USPS leadership, we were told that service disruptions were driven by a depleted workforce. While the district has made meaningful progress toward addressing service disruptions, these staffing reductions would come just as DE/PA-2 has finally begun to address many of its long-term challenges. We are also concerned that the Postal Service has yet to provide a rationale for these staffing reductions, or how USPS plans to prevent any service disruption during this transition period.

Furthermore, throughout the review process, USPS has not engaged with the public or postal workers openly and transparently. During the public review period, USPS held just one public meeting, which was held during working hours on a weekday, leaving most postal workers and members of the public unable to attend. In addition, despite identifying a potential reduction of 23 staff, we have yet to learn who will be affected, how USPS plans to relocate these workers within the terms of the collective bargaining agreement, or the cost of implementing the transition and staff relocation. As USPS proceeds, we urge you to work with affected stakeholders, including relevant unions, state and federal representatives, and Delaware customers, to address these outstanding concerns. In the case of career reassignments, we ask the Postal Service to address the needs of impacted employees. We believe that extending the public comment period into January 2024 and holding another public meeting during a more accessible time will demonstrate that the Postal Service is engaged in this process as a good-faith partner. Finally, we ask for proactive communication with postal workers about the impact of this MPFR on their careers.

We look forward to working together to ensure that USPS can continue to serve the people of Delaware efficiently and effectively. We thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Lisa Blunt Rochester
Member of Congress