

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 21, 2020

The Honorable Alex M. Azar II
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave. SW
Washington D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Azar:

During this pandemic, the United States Postal Service (USPS) is serving as a lifeline for Americans who rely on the delivery of lifesaving medications and supplies to their homes. In light of the severe financial challenges facing the Postal Service, we write to share our deep concern that any reduction in service standards or move towards privatization would negatively impact the health of millions of Americans. We therefore urge you to publicly convey to the President and his Administration the importance of the Postal Service to achieving HHS' stated mission to "enhance the health and well-being of all Americans."

According to the American Postal Workers Union, USPS delivered 1.2 billion prescriptions in 2019, including almost 100% of the prescriptions from the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Recent data also shows a 20% increase over last year in mail-order prescriptions since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. These figures clearly demonstrate the need for a reliable and efficient Postal Service to ensure continued patient access to care. The provision of health care products through the Postal Service is particularly important for Americans who live in rural communities, especially those who have pre-existing conditions or experience disabilities. During the pandemic, the Postal Service has also been responsible for delivering millions of pounds of medical supplies, testing kits, medicine, and personnel protective equipment to our hospitals and frontline workers. Doctors, EMTs, nurses, sanitation staff, and other frontline workers rely on USPS to maintain the medical supply chain essential to battling COVID-19.

As you are likely aware, the Postal Service is currently facing significant financial challenges. Former Postmaster General Megan Brennan testified that unless Congress provides emergency funding to stabilize the Postal Service's finances, USPS could run out of funds within a year. Given the fact that the Postal Service is the largest delivery service and the only carrier that guarantees delivery to every address in the United States, we are gravely concerned that any reduction in standards or services provided by USPS could have severe consequences for our health care system. On August 18, 2020, Postmaster General Louis DeJoy announced that he was suspending the implementation of any operational changes before the November 3, 2020 Federal election. While this is welcome news in the short term, we are still concerned that if USPS does not receive emergency funding and maintain service standards, millions of Americans, especially those who are at highest risk during the current public health crisis, could lose access to the resources they need to keep themselves and their communities safe and healthy. We therefore urgently request that you convey to the President and the public the significant negative impact that a reduction in USPS service would have on our health care system.

Thank you for your attention to this letter. Again, we believe that ensuring the long-term financial health of the Postal Service is critical to our shared mission of protecting the health and well-being of all Americans. Millions of Americans are relying on your leadership to ensure that they can retain access to lifesaving medications during the pandemic. We look forward to continuing to work with you to support the American people at this difficult time.

Sincerely,



Chris Pappas
Member of Congress

/s/
Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress

/s/
Tom O'Halleran
Member of Congress

/s/
Cindy Axne
Member of Congress

/s/
Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress

/s/
Michael F.Q. San Nicolas
Member of Congress

/s/
Kendra S. Horn
Member of Congress

/s/
Steven Horsford
Member of Congress

/s/
TJ Cox
Member of Congress

/s/
Elissa Slotkin
Member of Congress

/s/
David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress

/s/
Ro Khanna
Member of Congress

/s/
Lauren Underwood
Member of Congress

/s/
Abby Finkenauer
Member of Congress

/s/
Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

/s/
Peter Welch
Member of Congress

/s/
Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress

/s/
Angie Craig
Member of Congress

/s/
Sean Casten
Member of Congress

/s/
Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress

/s/
Rosa L. DeLauro
Member of Congress

/s/
Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress

/s/
Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress

/s/
Matt Cartwright
Member of Congress

/s/
Jim Costa
Member of Congress

/s/
Chrissy Houlahan
Member of Congress

/s/
André Carson
Member of Congress

/s/
John Garamendi
Member of Congress

/s/
Dina Titus
Member of Congress

/s/
Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

/s/
Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress

/s/
Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress