

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

June 5, 2020

The Honorable Robert Wilkie  
Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20420

Dear Secretary Wilkie:

Thank you for your commitment to ensuring that our nation's veterans receive the high-quality health care they have earned during the COVID-19 pandemic. Especially now, veterans, many of whom are in high-risk health groups, are not able to leave their homes and are relying on life-saving medicines shipped by the United States Postal Service (USPS). In light of the severe financial challenges facing the Postal Service, we write to share our deep concern that any reduction in services or move to privatize the Postal Service will negatively impact both the VA and the millions of veterans that your Department serves every day.

According to the American Postal Workers Union, in 2019, the United States Postal Service delivered 1.2 billion prescriptions, including almost 100% of the prescriptions from the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Especially during the current public health crisis, the Postal Service has served as a lifeline for millions of Americans, including veterans and those living in rural communities, many of whom are especially vulnerable to COVID-19. By delivering lifesaving medications and other necessities, the Postal Service is allowing our nation's heroes to remain safely at home.

Unfortunately, the Postal Service is now confronting grave financial difficulties. During recent testimony to Congress, Postmaster General Megan Brennan stated that, absent congressional intervention, the Postal Service could run out of funds by the end of September 2020. Because USPS is the largest delivery service and the only mail carrier that guarantees delivery to every address in America, we are deeply concerned about how the Postal Service's dire financial condition may impact the care VA provides to our nation's veterans.

Given our concerns, we ask that you respond to the following questions no later than June 17, 2020:

- Over the past 5 years, how many prescriptions has the VA sent through the Postal Service?
- Does the VA have a negotiated service agreement with the VA? If so, what are the parameters of the agreement?
- During the current National Emergency Concerning the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Outbreak, has the VA increased its use of the Postal Service, compared to the same period during the previous year?
- How would the loss of the Postal Service affect veterans' ability to receive care in their own communities, especially during this current National Emergency?
- If the Postal Service were to significantly reduce operations, what plans does VA have in place to maintain the same quality of care for our veterans?
  - Outside of the Postal Service, is there existing capacity to meet the VA's mail-order pharmacy and mail shipment needs?

- What impacts would the loss of the Postal Service have on veterans who reside in rural and super rural communities?
- If you have concluded that a severe reduction in USPS service would negatively affect the veterans you serve, have you conveyed your concerns to the President or to others in the Administration?

Thank you for your urgent attention to this issue. Again, we believe that protecting the long-term financial health of the Postal Service will also help safeguard the health and well-being of our nation's veterans. We look forward to continuing to work with you to support our veterans at this difficult moment in our nation's history.

Sincerely,



Chris Pappas  
Member of Congress



Max Rose  
Member of Congress



Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.  
Member of Congress



Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress



Conor Lamb  
Member of Congress