

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 20, 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-221, 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
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader McCarthy, and Minority Leader Schumer,

We write as the Representatives from the Commonwealth of Virginia to commend the bipartisan efforts made to provide resources and assistance to those negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. We were disappointed, however, that the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act did not include enough funding to provide the United States Postal Service (USPS) with the resources it needs to maintain operations during this unprecedented pandemic. Without significant federal investment in the Postal Service, it will run out of operating funds by September.

While 630,000 postal workers continue to deliver information and packages each day to every household in our nation, the Postal Service projects a possible 50% decline in mail volume between now and the end of the current fiscal year.^[1] This decline is directly tied to COVID-19 impacts.^[2] Such a precipitous drop would have a devastating impact on an organization already facing serious financial constraints. Unfortunately, the CARES Act only included provisions allowing Postal Service to borrow up to \$10 billion. This amount is woefully less than the Postal Service needs to survive.^[3]

^[1] The size of the Postal Service workforce is available at U.S. Postal Service, Sizing It Up (online at <https://facts.usps.com/size-and-scope/>); the decline in mail volume was provided to the Committee on Oversight and Reform during a briefing from Postmaster General Megan J. Brennan (Apr. 9, 2020).

^[2] Information provided to the Committee on Oversight and Reform from U.S. Postal Service officials via telephone on the week of Mar. 16th, 2020.

^[3] Pub. L. No. 116-136 (2020).

Virginia has nearly 17,000 Postal Service employees who pay roughly \$107 million per year in federal taxes. Virginia is home to 907 Postal Service facilities, reaching every business and home in each community – urban, suburban, and rural – across the state. The Postal Service pays nearly \$22 million per year to Virginia-based landlords who own the roughly 700 Postal Service-operated facilities. In short, the Postal Service is a vital component of Virginia’s economy as well as serving to tether communities together by delivering mail and packages.^[4]

Nationwide, the Postal Service provides affordable, universal delivery of mail and e-commerce packages to more than 159 million households and businesses each day. The Postal Service undergirds a \$1.4 billion mailing industry that employs 7.5 million people.^[5]

Yet the Postal Service went largely ignored in previously enacted coronavirus-related legislation.

The Postal Service is a critical part of America’s infrastructure that deserves to be a fundamental focus of our legislative recovery efforts. We support provisions that ensure the postal service will continue operations and deliver essential goods and services to the American people.

The Postal Service is more critical to our nation’s success than ever.

- Currently, students across our nation rely on the Postal Service for delivery of learning packets from schools, books from nonprofit organizations, and other learning materials from private sector companies.
- According to Axios, the number of prescription drugs sent through the mail has “skyrocketed over the past few weeks.”^[6] The Postal Service made 1 billion prescription drug deliveries last year.^[7]
- Nearly 26% of citizens vote through vote-by-mail options.^[8] Without a functioning and robust Postal Service, voting-by-mail will not be an option in November.

The Postal Service has already proven its value to this nation in a time of crisis. The Postal Service will be essential in delivering COVID vaccines across our nation when they are ready for distribution. We cannot afford to lose this massive infrastructure, which serves every individual in this nation.

We look forward to working with you to take the necessary steps to ensure the solvency and continuation of our Postal Service in the next coronavirus recovery package.

^[4] Information provided to the Committee on Oversight and Reform from the U.S. Postal Service via email on April 22, 2020.

^[5] U.S. Postal Service, *Sizing It Up* (online at <https://facts.usps.com/size-and-scope/>).

^[6] Axios, *People Are Filling More Prescriptions by Mail Amid Coronavirus Crisis* (Apr. 21, 2020) (online at www.axios.com/prescriptions-by-mail-coronavirus-e638b1ba-fcbe-4fad-b852-bdd98835db2f.html).

^[7] Information provided to the Committee on Oversight and Reform via telephone on the week of Mar. 16, 2020.

^[8] U.S. Election Assistance Commission, *Election Administration and Voting Survey: 2018 Comprehensive Report* (Jan. 2018) (online at https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/eac_assets/1/6/2018_EAVS_Report.pdf).

Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress



Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress



Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress



Jennifer Wexton
Member of Congress



Elaine G. Luria
Member of Congress



Abigail D. Spanberger
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