

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 23, 2022

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

Dear Postmaster General DeJoy,

Over the last few months, our offices have frequently heard from constituents regarding concerns about their mail delivery. Our staffs have already seen an uptick in constituent inquiries as we move into the busy holiday mailing season, and we have been working to bring these service complaints to the attention of the United States Postal Service (USPS). We have heard from the USPS that a national workforce shortage is the largest contributing factor to service delays. While we understand that the country is facing a workforce shortage and hiring is a challenge across many industries, the USPS has yet to implement best practices used in the private sector to attract and maintain a functional postal workforce during these challenging times.

According to reports, the workforce shortage is placing a strain on current USPS employees. Employees have shared with us that they are working long hours, with little or no days off, to deliver mail in a timely fashion. Further, they have shared that workforce morale is low, leading to current staff pursuing other opportunities and making prospective staff skeptical of joining the USPS.

Hiring Efforts

The USPS has alerted us to challenges recruiting and ushering candidates through the hiring process at the national level. In some cases, the overwhelming majority of candidates in the applicant pool did not proceed past the pre-screening process, representing a major obstacle in hiring.

For those who pass the pre-screening process, according to the USPS's hiring website, the candidate will be sent an email and given 72 hours to complete a non-proctored assessment from the time the candidate received their email initiation. For positions requiring a proctored assessment, a similar, time-sensitive process is applied. If they do not do so within the allotted time, the candidate becomes ineligible for consideration for that position and must restart the application process. There also appears to be no other notice given to candidates, who may have waited several weeks before hearing back.

- **Since the start of the year, what is the percentage of applicants nationally and regionally who pass pre-screening but do not open the follow-up email from USPS or complete the assessment linked in the email within the allotted time? What other reasons do applicants fail the pre-screening process, and at what percentages?**

- **Of those who pass the pre-screening process, what is the percentage of applicants that fail the security check process, and for what reasons?**
- **Why does the USPS require such a tight turnaround time for completing the assessments and have you considered changing this process? Has the USPS considered implementing call-backs for eligible candidates who do not respond to the initial email to confirm they received the invitation to advance in the hiring process?**
- **What efforts has the USPS undertaken to identify opportunities to improve this hiring process, and how are you implementing these improvements?**

The USPS relies heavily on career fairs to attract potential new employees. Career fairs are most effective when potential employees can apply for a position on-site, yet USPS career fairs often do not have computers or tablets available for this purpose. Additionally, advertising is critical to the success of these career fairs, yet some post offices report not having adequate resources for advertising these events. Finally, enlisting partners like the Department of Labor, local community leaders, workforce boards, relevant labor groups (such as the National Association of Letter Carriers and the Rural Letter Carriers Association), and other stakeholder groups can expand the reach of these events.

- **What efforts are being undertaken to ensure local post offices that are running career fairs on the ground have the appropriate resources to conduct successful events?**
- **What steps are you taking to ensure these local facilities have both an adequate budget and tools, like computers or tablets able to accept applications on the spot, to most efficiently conduct career fairs?**
- **What analyses are you conducting at the headquarters level to identify what practices are most effective in recruiting new employees and how are you sharing these findings locally and regionally?**

Incentivizing the Workforce

Given national workforce challenges, many employers across various industries have adopted proven hiring and retention incentives, like hiring and retention bonuses and referral bonuses for workers who refer friends or family to positions. Many agencies within the federal government are using these tools as well. However, the USPS has not implemented any of these programs to bolster its workforce expansion efforts.

- **What consideration has been given by USPS to implementing hiring, retention, and referral bonuses as part of its efforts to address its critical workforce shortage and when can we expect the USPS to implement these tools?**
- **What other tools has the USPS considered and/or implemented to improve hiring and retention of the USPS workforce and what has resulted from those efforts to date?**
- **What steps, if any, are being taken to reduce turnover among workers?**

As we move into the busiest time of the year for the mailing industry, we are extremely concerned about our USPS workforce. The USPS provides critical services to seniors, small businesses, veterans, rural communities, and families who rely on the mail every day. The USPS workforce is the backbone of this institution.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter, and we look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator