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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION &
INFRASTRUCTURE
SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE
CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY

July 15, 2026

The Honorable David Steiner
Postmaster General
United States Postal Service
745 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington, DC 20260

Postmaster General Steiner,

I am writing once again regarding the performance of the United States Postal Service (USPS) in South Dakota. Earlier this year, I shared concerns raised by thousands of South Dakotans, outlined persistent service challenges, and expressed my hope that by July 2026 we would be able to point to measurable improvements in service reliability, staffing, and delivery performance.

I appreciate the work USPS has undertaken to improve operations over the past year. The latest performance data shows meaningful progress across much of South Dakota, demonstrating that operational improvements are possible even in some of the nation's most geographically challenging rural delivery areas. Those improvements deserve recognition, and I appreciate the efforts of USPS employees and leadership who have helped produce them.

However, South Dakotans in the Sioux Falls region still report delayed and missed deliveries, inconsistent service, staffing shortages, and disruptions affecting prescriptions, financial documents, newspapers, and small businesses. In a rural state like South Dakota, dependable mail service is not simply a convenience, it is essential infrastructure that families, businesses, and communities rely upon every day.

These concerns are reflected in USPS's own performance data, attached to this letter. Using September 2025 – the closest available ZIP3 benchmark to the beginning of your tenure, as the point of comparison – USPS has achieved measurable improvements across nearly every South Dakota service region. ZIP3 regions 572 through 577 have all shown improvement across key inbound mail performance metrics. Those results are encouraging and demonstrate that meaningful progress is achievable.

However, the two service areas that encompass nearly half of South Dakota's resident – ZIP3 regions 570 and 571 – have experienced measurable declines over the same period. Given the success achieved elsewhere in the state, understanding why these two regions remain outliers is particularly important.

I am encouraged by USPS's decision to install a new PILS machine serving the 571 region. That

investment reflects a recognition that additional operational capacity is needed, and I am hopeful it will produce the same measurable improvements that residents in other parts of South Dakota have already begun to experience.

At the same time, I recognize that no single investment is likely to resolve every operational challenge affecting service in the 570 and 571 regions. For that reason, I want to ensure the deployment of this new equipment is accompanied by whatever additional operational, staffing, or transportation improvements may be necessary to restore reliable service. My office stands ready to assist that effort wherever Congress can be helpful.

Accordingly, I respectfully request a written response addressing the following:

1. The primary operational factors contributing to declining performance in ZIP3 regions 570 and 571, including staffing levels, vacancy rates, transportation networks, mail processing operations, facility capacity, or any other relevant challenges;
2. The specific actions USPS is taking to improve service in these regions, including how the new PILS machine fits into the agency's broader operational strategy and whether successful practices implemented elsewhere in South Dakota can be applied in these service areas;
3. The measurable performance goals and anticipated timeline for improvement in the affected regions, including how USPS intends to evaluate and communicate progress; and
4. Any legislative, regulatory, operational, or resource constraints that may be limiting USPS's ability to improve service and where Congress may be able to provide assistance.

My objective is not simply to identify shortcomings, but to better understand how we can work together to improve mail service for the people of South Dakota. If there are barriers preventing USPS from delivering the level of service South Dakotans deserve, I want to understand what role Congress can play in addressing them.

The progress achieved across much of the state demonstrates that improvement is possible. I am hopeful the investments now being made in the Sioux Falls region will allow those same gains to extend to the communities that have yet to experience them. I look forward to working with you to ensure that every South Dakotan receives the reliable postal service they depend on.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



DUSTY JOHNSON
Member of Congress

