



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

May 3, 2023

The Honorable Louis DeJoy
Postmaster General
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20260

Dear Postmaster General DeJoy,

I am writing to express deep concern about the safety of U.S. Postal Service (Postal Service) employees, including letter carriers. I urge you to take all necessary steps to protect postal employees who work tirelessly to serve our communities.

Like many other parts of the country, my Congressional District (WI-04) has experienced an alarming increase in armed robberies and assaults against postal employees. In this year alone, Milwaukee police have reported at least five armed robberies of letter carriers to obtain master arrow keys.¹ And as you know, Aundre Cross, a Postal Service letter carrier was shot and killed while delivering mail last December 2022. With these increasing attacks, it is critical that the Postal Service proactively work and use all available resources and tools to better protect its employees, working closely with other federal, state, and local officials.

In my previous letter, I noted concerns about mail theft, which is increasingly putting our letter carriers and other postal employees under greater threat. As you consider additional actions to take to safeguard postal employees and to work with key stakeholders including local law enforcement, I urge you to rescind any policy changes made by the Postal Service that has effectively restricted Postal Inspection Service personnel to Postal Service property, reiterating a request I made in a recent letter to you. In that previous letter, I urged you to do all you can to ensure that the Postal Inspection Service has full authority it needs to protect the mail and those engaged in expediting and delivering it, wherever those employees or mailboxes may be located, on or off postal property. I hope you will move swiftly to do so.

Since my last letter, police in Milwaukee recently arrested and charged eight members of a mail theft ring, seizing six guns, a bag of opened mail (including 900 personal checks made out to hundreds of different people), and two arrow keys.² Reports indicate that such organized groups are working to attack mail carriers, steal mail and arrow keys, then sell thousands of stolen checks on the dark web.³ The sophisticated nature of these groups demonstrates the need for the U.S. Postal Service to devote additional resources and attention and utilize all tools to help protect its employees, including working closely with other federal, state, and local authorities.

¹ <https://www.wisn.com/article/eight-wisconsin-men-arrested-and-charged-for-mail-theft-ring/43743951#>

² <https://www.wisn.com/article/eight-wisconsin-men-arrested-and-charged-for-mail-theft-ring/43743951>

³ <https://www.abcactionnews.com/news/local-news/i-team-investigates/thieves-targeting-checks-attack-mail-carriers-in-record-numbers>

Additionally, the Postal Service previously expressed to me that it was working on improved locking mechanisms and other security improvements for collection boxes, such as electronic device coupling that would work in conjunction with an arrow key. These changes have the potential to reduce incentives to steal arrow keys and deter future robberies and crimes against postal employees. Please provide more information about the progress on the implementation of these changes in Milwaukee, including:

- Whether these new, more theft resistant boxes have been deployed in the region and a timeline for their deployment if they have not been, including when these newer, more theft resistant boxes will replace all existing boxes in the region?
- How close to deploying the new coupling technology are you at this point and how will you determine where boxes with those additional security features are deployed?

It is of vital importance that those responsible for armed robberies and assaults against letter carriers are brought to justice. Please provide information on:

- The extent to which the Postal Service is working with the Department of Justice, regional U.S. Attorney's offices, and state and local law enforcement partners, to target organized mail theft organizations and others who are preying on our postal employees.
- How many cases involving assault of robberies of postal workers or facilities investigated by the Postal Inspection Service have been referred to the Department of Justice or state or local authorities for prosecution?
- Have you asked local law enforcement (in Milwaukee and other affected communities nationwide) to increase support or attention to routes that have seen increased attacks on letter carriers?
- Are there additional U.S. Postal Inspection Service resources that can be deployed or made available to support carriers and other postal employees as they carry out their responsibilities both on and off of Postal Service property or facilities?

Lastly, in the Milwaukee area, I urge you to work with partners to create a dedicated Task Force of law enforcement personnel at the federal, state, and local levels to help identify, investigate, disrupt, and prosecute those involved in schemes to attack our postal employees in order to steal the mail.

I hope you agree that providing for the safety and security of letter carriers and other postal employees must be a priority. Our postal employees are working hard to serve communities across our nation, and they deserve to be able to go to work knowing that they can do so safely. I am following this issue closely, and I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,


Gwen Moore
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Jeff A. Drake, Wisconsin District Manager