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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SELECT REVENUE MEASURES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRADE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE
MODERNIZATION OF CONGRESS

October 27, 2020

The Honorable Bob Ferguson
Washington State Attorney General
1125 Washington St SE
PO Box 40100
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Attorney General Ferguson,

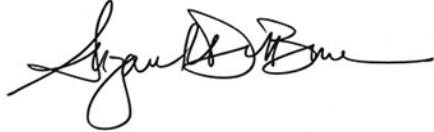
Over the past few months, I have heard numerous complaints from constituents who have experienced delays in the delivery of medication, bills, and other important paperwork through the United States Postal Service (USPS). My constituents are also worried about the impact that these delays may have on the timely return of ballots, and I am concerned that these allegations, if true, constitute politically motivated election interference. Washington uses an entirely vote-by-mail system and over two million voters in our state have already cast their ballot, making timely processing of ballots by the USPS critical so that every vote can be counted. I have also heard from workers closely associated with the Redmond postal processing facility, also known as the East DDC, that changes at the facility have intentionally slowed down mail processing.

After hearing concerning reports that several delivery barcode sorter (DBCS) machines had been removed from service, on October 9, 2020 I wrote to Postmaster General Louis DeJoy seeking answers about the status of DBCS machines at the Redmond facility.ⁱ On October 26, 2020, I was told by the USPS that “six machines were removed from service between July 31 and August 14, one of which was subsequently returned to service.”ⁱⁱⁱ However, USPS declined to comment on the operating status of the remaining machines, saying it was “not in the best interest of the Postal Service to disclose information on the existing capacity and total machine inventory at the East DDC.”

I urge you to investigate whether the Redmond facility is complying with recent court orders regarding the processing of election mail. It is my understanding that on September 17, 2020, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Washington issued an injunction requiring the Postal Service to replace, reassemble, or reconnect any machines that are necessary for processing and delivering election mail in a timely manner.ⁱⁱⁱ Furthermore, the court subsequently declined USPS’s request to omit machines that had been disassembled from its original ruling, suggesting that the four DBCS machines in Redmond whose parts have been removed would fall under the court’s order.^{iv} Therefore, I respectfully request you investigate whether the removal from service of five DBCS machines at the East DDC facility in Redmond are impeding the timely processing and delivery of election mail in violation of the September federal court injunction.

Thank you for your attention to this important and urgent matter.

Sincerely,



Suzan K. DelBene
Member of Congress

ⁱ https://delbene.house.gov/uploadedfiles/2020-10-09_delbene_letter_to_postmaster_general_on_redmond_facility_.pdf

ⁱⁱ https://delbene.house.gov/uploadedfiles/response_from_usps_concerning_redmond_facility.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ https://agportal-s3bucket.s3.amazonaws.com/uploadedfiles/Another/News/Press_Releases/ECF%2081%20-%20Order%20Granting%20PI.pdf

^{iv} <https://cases.justia.com/federal/district-courts/washington/waedce/1:2020cv03127/91975/90/0.pdf?ts=1603247482>