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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives

January 26, 2022

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 strongly urge you to reconsider your plan to conduct an operational mail move at the Seattle East DDC facility in Redmond, WA. On January 5, 2022, I had the opportunity to tour this facility and see firsthand the incredible breadth of work this facility and its employees support. Following my tour, I spoke directly with union leaders and workers who are employed at the facility, and they shared their concerns about the impending mail move, lack of necessary processing equipment, delays in mail delivery, and staffing shortages.

On October 1, 2021, I wrote to you expressing deep concern over your plans to proceed with mail moves at 18 facilities across the country, including the Seattle East DDC, and asked for additional information regarding the rationale of these moves before you proceeded with implementing any changes. Your response to my letter was unsatisfactory in providing a business case justification for why these changes should move forward, and following my tour of the facility, I am more convinced that this operational mail move should not proceed. It is my understanding that after initially setting February 26, 2022, as the mail move date, that date has since been scrapped and you are now considering whether this mail move should still move forward. I request that you immediately suspend your plans to move mail processing operations from this facility, and instead invest in the infrastructure needed to ensure this facility can support the growing region.

Over the last decade, which is when these mail moves and consolidations were originally slated to take place, my district and the surrounding region have grown significantly. For example, the population of Kirkland, WA, which is served by the Seattle East DDC, has jumped from 48,787 to 92,175 people from 2010 to 2020, an increase of nearly 90 percent.<sup>1</sup> Yet in that same time, equipment that is critical to the timely processing of mail has been significantly reduced at the Seattle East DDC.

When I wrote to you in October 2020, ahead of the 2020 presidential election, expressing concerns about reports that delivery bar code sorter (DBCS) machines had been removed from the facility, you wrote that you could not confirm the total number of machines in operation but could say that six machines had been removed from service and only one had been returned to service. During my tour, I learned that in fact there used to be 16 DBCS machines and now only

seven remain in service.<sup>ii</sup> This shortage of processing equipment is straining operations, with the vast majority of machines servicing an unprecedented 3 zones and requiring multiple shifts to run the machines. I urge you to immediately restore the DBCS machines necessary for the safe and timely processing of mail.

In addition to cancelling your plans to move forward with this operational mail move, I request the immediate withdrawal of the withholding notices that were issued last fall. During my tour, I heard about the hiring challenges that USPS is facing, including at the Seattle East DDC facility. While these withholding notices remain in effect, they serve as a signal to job applicants that this facility may soon be gone, which consequently hinders the ability of the East DDC to hire the employees necessary to properly serve the region. I urge you to make a timely decision about the fate of this facility to provide certainty to current and future employees at the Seattle East DDC.

I found my tour insightful, and I invite you, or your appropriate designee, to visit my district so you can witness the tremendous growth we have experienced as a region and understand the importance of preserving and improving the mail processing operations at the Seattle East DDC.

I look forward to your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Suzan K. DelBene", written over a horizontal line.

Suzan K. DelBene  
Member of Congress

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/kirklandcitywashington/PST045221>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.redmond-reporter.com/news/postal-workers-concerned-about-usps-consolidation-impact-on-regions-mail-delivery/>