Mr. Roman Martinez IV  
Chairman Board of Governors  
United States Postal Service  
475 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W.  
Washington D.C. 20260-1000

Dear Chairman Martinez:

As the United States Postal Service (USPS) prepares to implement its record fourth stamp price increase in eighteen months, we write to express concern over the negative impact these frequent rate increases have had on mail volume, customer volume, the overall financial viability of the USPS, and the pocketbooks of our constituents. While price increases may increase profit on one side of their ledger, USPS’s leadership has failed to acknowledge the adverse effects price increases have had on their bottom line. These rate increases directly threaten Americans who depend on a well-functioning postal service for a myriad of needs, such as their healthcare, small businesses, and even personal correspondence. While we highly value the services the USPS provides and appreciate the challenges it faces, we cannot ignore recent reports demonstrating that the USPS’s reliance on frequent and large rate increases has been misguided and destructive. As such, we urge the Governors to halt any further rate increases and to immediately reassess how the long-term viability of the USPS could be jeopardized by these persistent increases.

The Delivering for America Plan (DFA) erroneously forecasted that the USPS would break even in FY2023. Not only did it not break even, the USPS lost $6.5 billion last fiscal year. Furthermore, the USPS expects to lose another $6.3 billion in FY2024. The USPS blames its financial performance on the impact of inflation. It’s important to note that the USPS already has the authority to raise rates far above the level of inflation, which it has fully taken advantage of with unprecedented frequency, and unfortunately, at the cost of mail volume.

Per the USPS FY2023 10-K document, the USPS suffered substantial losses in volume for all types of mail, including parcels. This is problematic, as the DFA predicted significant growth of parcels to offset mail volume decline. Many of our constituents have indicated that the losses in mail volume are attributable to the large and frequent postage increases, and the USPS demand models are miscalculating the impact of these increases.

Furthermore, these steep rate increases have also priced out crucial consumers in the market, resulting in the permanent loss of USPS customers who are forced to either scramble to find alternative options or find themselves unable to send mail at all. Even worse, according to Congressional testimony from the Coalition for a 21st Century Postal Service, historical trends
suggest that lost customers do not return. Therefore, the continuation of reckless rate increases seriously threatens the long-term financial viability of the USPS.

In addition, we are concerned about the numerous service problems many of our colleagues have raised with the USPS in the last year. The combination of paying more money for poor service is disincentivizing consumers, businesses and everyday Americans to continue utilizing the mail.

Given last fiscal year’s disastrous financial results and widespread service issues, we once again echo our concerns regarding the Delivering for American Plan, and believe the USPS must pause and reassess its aggressive rate increase strategy. Since USPS management has indicated it does not intend to deviate from twice-yearly postal rate increases, at least through 2026, it is the responsibility of the USPS Governors to intervene before more damage is done to the financial viability of the U.S. mailing industry and the long-term sustainability of the USPS.

Sincerely,

Emanuel Cleaver, II  
Member of Congress

Sam Graves  
Member of Congress

Mary Sattler Peltola  
Member of Congress

Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress

Elise M. Stefanik  
Member of Congress

Angie Craig  
Member of Congress
Shri Thaneedar  
Member of Congress

Sharice L. Davids  
Member of Congress  
Kansas Third District

Jill Tokuda  
Member of Congress

Stacey E. Plaskett  
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress

Diana Harshbarger  
Member of Congress

Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress

Abigail Davis Spanberger  
Member of Congress

Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress

David Kustoff  
Member of Congress