

United States Senate

November 21, 2022

Mr. Louis DeJoy
Postmaster General
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Room 10300
Washington, DC 20260

The Honorable Roman Martinez IV
Chairman
USPS Board of Governors
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Room 10300
Washington, DC 20260

Dear Postmaster General DeJoy and Chairman Martinez,

We write to express our support for increased electrification of the United States Postal Service (USPS) mail delivery fleet, and a Next Generation Delivery Vehicle (NGDV) contract that protects the auto manufacturing workers who will bring this modern fleet to life. Prior to the enactment of the *Inflation Reduction Act*, USPS announced that it would increase its fleet electrification target to at least 40 percent. Now, with the *Inflation Reduction Act* (Public Law 117-169) appropriating an additional \$3 billion for zero-emission delivery vehicles and infrastructure, we urge you to make a long-term commitment to increasing USPS's fleet electrification commitment to at least 95 percent, and to use this additional funding to expand upon prior zero-emission vehicle purchasing commitments in order to make as much progress as possible toward that goal.

USPS's fleet of old, less fuel-efficient delivery vehicles is ripe for electrification. In February 2022, USPS finalized its first electrification plan, which committed to a dismal 10-percent battery electric vehicle (BEV) fleet. After justifiable outrage from a range of environmental, labor, and environmental justice organizations, USPS increased that goal to 40 percent when it committed to purchasing 50,000 new NGDV trucks, half of which will be BEVs, as well as another 34,500 Commercial Off-the-Shelf (COTS) vehicles comprising a sufficient number of BEVs to make 4 in 10 USPS trucks zero-emission vehicles.¹² When USPS announced these changes in July 2022, *before* the enactment of the *Inflation Reduction Act* in August 2022, it had sufficient financial resources to implement them.

The *Inflation Reduction Act* appropriates \$3 billion more for the electrification of the USPS mail delivery fleet — \$1.29 billion for the purchase of zero-emission delivery vehicles and \$1.71

¹ Jacob Bogage, *USPS will make 40% of its new trucks electric, up from 10%*, Wash. Post (July 20, 2022), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2022/07/20/usps-electric-trucks/>; *Notice To Postpone Public Hearing and Extend Public Comment Period for Supplement to the Next Generation Delivery Vehicles Acquisitions Final Environmental Impact Statement*, 87 FR 43561, 43561 (July 2022), <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/07/21/2022-15616/notice-to-postpone-public-hearing-and-extend-public-comment-period-for-supplement-to-the-next>.

² Brian Wakamo, *Auto Workers, climate Groups Team Up to Demand Union-Made, Electric Postal Vehicles*, Inequality.org (April 15, 2022), <https://inequality.org/great-divide/auto-workers-climate-groups-team-up-demand-union-made-electric-postal-vehicles/>

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billion for the purchase and installation of related infrastructure.³ It also includes \$15 million to the USPS Office of the Inspector General (OIG) for oversight of the implementation of these provisions. With this significant new investment, USPS can electrify its mail delivery fleet well above the 40-percent pre-*Inflation Reduction Act* level. The USPS OIG found that 98.5 percent of mail delivery routes are suitable for a 70-mile range electric NGDV.⁴ USPS should use its new *Inflation Reduction Act* funding to build on its 40-percent commitment to reach that 95 percent target. Moreover, USPS should use its resources and negotiating power to ensure that this public money supports high-quality auto manufacturing and supply chain jobs, where workers are well-compensated and have the free and fair choice to join a union.

Greater fleet electrification will bring critical environmental benefits. According to one report, electric vehicles can replace 97 percent of USPS vehicles, saving USPS \$4.3 billion over the fleet's lifetime, reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 12.8 megatons in 2025, and lowering air pollution in communities across the country.⁵ And as the USPS OIG found, "[a] large order of electric delivery vehicles would also help fuel the growing electric vehicle market, accelerating a broader transition in the United States."⁶

We urge USPS to use the \$3 billion in new funding from the *Inflation Reduction Act* to further *increase* its vehicle electrification efforts and not merely spend the money on the 40-percent BEV commitment it had already made and had the resources to achieve. With *Inflation Reduction Act* funding, USPS should aim higher and strive for at least a 95-percent electric mail delivery fleet that will reduce dangerous greenhouse-gas emissions, help usher in an era of ubiquitous clean car technology, and protect and create high quality union jobs in the domestic EV supply chain by insisting that the workforce producing the fleet affords workers the opportunity to collectively bargain.

Thanks to the investments from the *Inflation Reduction Act* and the *Postal Service Reform Act* (Public Law 117-108) earlier this summer, the USPS has the financial resources and opportunity to build the NGDV fleet to reflect the latest advancements in BEV technology, and to do so in a way that makes real investments in both a cleaner future and high-quality auto manufacturing and supply chain jobs. It is our national responsibility to contribute to curbing climate change and local air pollution. But to do this, the agency must correct the underlying deficiencies and inaccurate assumptions from your environmental review for the NGDV acquisition as part of your supplemental review – especially the inaccurate assumptions on BEV delivery truck costs and benefits and the true costs and environmental impacts of their gas-powered counterparts. Given the significant environmental impact of vehicle production, your correction should include

³ Pub. L. No. 117-169, § 70002 (2022).

⁴ Office of Inspector General, United States Post Office, RISC Report, *Electric Delivery Vehicles and the Post Office* at 7 (Mar. 17, 2022), <https://www.uspsig.gov/sites/default/files/document-library-files/2022/RISC-WP-22-003.pdf>.

⁵ *Federal Fleet Electrification Assessment*, Atlas Public Policy (Aug. 2021), <https://atlaspolicy.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Federal-Fleet-Electrification-Assessment.pdf>.

⁶ Office of Inspector General, United States Post Office, RISC Report, *Electric Delivery Vehicles and the Post Office* at 7 (Mar. 17, 2022), <https://www.uspsig.gov/sites/default/files/document-library-files/2022/RISC-WP-22-003.pdf>.

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the use of an already existing vehicle manufacturing facility rather than a new facility. We ask that you commit to ensuring that these new vehicles—including their essential parts and components, are built by workers earning good wages and benefits, in safe, diverse, and democratic work environments.

We look forward to your response explaining how USPS intends to use *Inflation Reduction Act* funding for NGDV fleet electrification above and beyond previously made commitments, as well as for the creation and protection of good union jobs building the vehicles and their components.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Mazie Hirono
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
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