

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 6, 2013

The Honorable John Boehner  
Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
H-232 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
522 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
H-204 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Boehner, Majority Leader Reid, Minority Leader Pelosi, and Minority Leader McConnell:

Since our nation's founding, the United States Postal Service, and its predecessor the Post Office Department, have been a vital part of the American experience binding our nation together. But today the Postal Service faces an uncertain future as it struggles to cope with the diminishing demand for paper-based communication. In fiscal year 2012 alone, the Postal Service lost \$15.9 billion, which is equivalent to \$25 million per day. Mail volume is now off more than 25 percent from its fiscal year 2006 peak, and further declines are projected for the foreseeable future. Without major, immediate restructuring actions, annual operating deficits will increase, and the Postal Service will sink much deeper into default on payments owed to taxpayers. It has already defaulted on \$11 billion in payments and carries an additional \$15 billion in Treasury-borrowed debt. Simply put, this situation is not sustainable.

Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe announced this morning that the Postal Service plans to transition to modified Saturday delivery on August 5th of this year. While letter mail and periodicals would no longer be delivered on Saturdays, this plan would maintain Saturday delivery of packages, including vital mail-order medicine, as well as other priority and express mail options. This common-sense reform would save the Postal Service more than two billion annually. This change has bipartisan support. President Obama has repeatedly called for moving to 5-day delivery of mail, most recently in his FY 2013 budget. Furthermore, according to an October 2011 Quinnipiac poll fully 79 percent of Americans endorse the shift.

What has impeded the Postal Service from phasing out universal Saturday delivery of letters is an appropriations rider carried in law since 1984 that ties 6-day mail delivery to the acceptance of roughly \$100 million in reimbursement from the Federal government for services rendered by the Postal Service. According to Postal Service estimates, the rider constitutes a more than \$2.5 billion annual unfunded mandate. With the current FY 2013 government funding resolution set to expire at the end of March, we ask that the 6-day mail rider be omitted from any

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subsequent government funding legislation, enabling the Postal Service to implement this necessary reform without impediment.

In his recent inaugural address, President Obama spoke about the need to find real solutions to our nation's problems. Supporting the US Postal Service's plan to move forward with 5-day mail delivery is one such solution worthy of bipartisan support.

We look forward to working with you to make sure that this time honored institution, the United States Postal Service, will continue to serve future generations of Americans.

Sincerely,



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Darrell E. Issa  
Chairman  
Committee on Oversight and  
Government Reform



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Tom Coburn  
Ranking Minority Member  
Senate Committee on Homeland Security  
and Governmental Affairs

cc: The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Minority Member  
House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

The Honorable Tom Carper, Chairman  
Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs