

Post Offices Across America: Removal of Mail Sorting Machines

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“DeJoy himself confirmed that there have been significant service slowdowns. It makes no sense at all for him to say USPS sorting machine ‘are not needed.’ Put them back.”

Update:

In testimony before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee on Friday, Postmaster General Louis DeJoy told lawmakers that he has “no intention” of returning or replacing mail sorting machines that have been removed from post offices across the nation.

Questioned by Sen. Gary Peters (D-Mich.) on the machine removals, DeJoy—a Trump megadonor with no prior experience working for the U.S. Postal Service—said, “They’re not needed, sir.”

Watch:

DeJoy says he has "no intention" of bringing back any mail sorting machines that were removed since he became postmaster general
<https://t.co/uPUUHHEj5w> pic.twitter.com/fr9XQTonGG

— CBS News (@CBSNews) [August 21, 2020](#)

“Postmaster General DeJoy himself confirmed that there have been significant service slowdowns,” [tweeted](#) Rep. Don Beyer (D-Va.) in response to DeJoy’s remarks. “It makes no sense at all for him to say USPS sorting machine ‘are not needed.’ Put them back.”

[According to](#) the American Postal Workers Union, the USPS under DeJoy’s leadership was moving to decommission more than 670 sorting machines around the country before the postmaster general vowed [earlier this week](#) to suspend his operational changes until after the November election.

Iowa Postal Workers Union President Kimberly Karol—a 30-year Postal Service veteran—[told NPR](#) last week that the removal of mail sorting machines “hinders our ability to process mail in the way that we had in the past.”

□□ Louis DeJoy testified today that more than 600 mail sorting machines removed by USPS under his leadership won't be reinstalled. That includes:

59 in FL
58 in TX
34 in OH
30 in PA
26 in MI
15 in NC
12 in VA
12 in WI
11 in GA <https://t.co/N6Ek0rU10B>

— Ari Berman (@AriBerman) [August 21, 2020](#)

In an [email](#) sent hours after DeJoy committed to suspending his policy changes, Kevin Couch, a director of maintenance operations at USPS, instructed postal workers “not to reconnect/reinstall machines that have been previously disconnected without approval from HQ Maintenance, no matter what direction they are getting from their plant manager.”

Following the hearing Friday, Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) [tweeted](#) that

“Louis DeJoy flat-out lied to the Senate today about the changes he’s implemented at the USPS, refused to cooperate with requests for documents, and rejected the idea of fixing his damage.”

“Enough is enough: the Board of Governors must remove DeJoy and reverse his acts of sabotage,” Warren added.

Earlier:

Postmaster General Louis DeJoy is set to testify Friday before the Republican-controlled Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee in the wake of [startling new revelations](#) surrounding the process that led to his appointment as well as [fresh details](#) on his plans for a massive post-election overhaul of mail operations.

Earlier this week, as *Common Dreams* [reported](#), DeJoy vowed to suspend—but not reverse—his policy changes at the U.S. Postal Service that caused massive package backlogs across the country and threatened the timely delivery of mail-in ballots.

[According to](#) the *Washington Post*, DeJoy “has mapped out far more sweeping changes to the U.S. Postal Service than previously disclosed, considering actions that could lead to slower mail delivery in parts of the country and higher prices for some mail services.”

“The plans under consideration, described by four people familiar with Postal Service discussions, would come after the election and touch on all corners of the agency’s work,” the Post reported. “They include raising package rates, particularly when delivering the last mile on behalf of big retailers; setting higher prices for service in Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico; curbing discounts for nonprofits; requiring election ballots to use first-class postage; and leasing space in Postal Service facilities to other government agencies and companies.”

Watch DeJoy’s testimony, which is scheduled to begin at 9:00 am ET:

In a [letter](#) (pdf) Thursday to USPS Board of Governors member John Barger—who, like DeJoy, is a major Republican donor—Reps. Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-Ill.) and Katie Porter (D-Calif.) raised alarm about Barger’s role in selecting the postmaster general, who was appointed in May despite his complete lack of experience at the agency.

“As you know, the executive hiring firm Russell Reynolds Associates was contracted to research and recommend a candidate to the United States Postal Service (USPS) Board of Governors for the position of postmaster General,” the lawmakers wrote. “According to individuals familiar with the process, Mr. Louis DeJoy was never recommended by this firm but was rather introduced by you to the selection committee.”

Krishnamoorthi and Porter said in a [joint statement](#) Thursday that “the appointment of Mr. Louis DeJoy as postmaster general was highly irregular and we are concerned that his candidacy may have been influenced by political motivations.”

“We need to get to the bottom of why Mr. DeJoy was considered, given that he apparently was not one of the candidates recommended by the firm contracted to make such recommendations, and did not undergo a background check as was urged by then-Inspector General and Vice Chairman of the USPS Board of Governors David Williams.”

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