

United States Senate

September 10, 2020

Mr. Louis DeJoy
Postmaster General and Chief Executive Officer
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W.
Room 4012
Washington, D.C. 20260

Dear Postmaster General DeJoy:

I write today to seek additional clarity regarding my questions about mail sorting machines and the removal of mail collection boxes across Montana. Your recent response fails to address several issues that I continue to hear about from Montanans. I remain concerned by recent USPS decisions and the lack of transparency around your decisions that affect service standards.

First, I ask that you reconcile the list of removed boxes that you provide in your response letter with the list that your staff provided to me on August 20, 2020. An email from your staff provided the location of boxes removed across Montana, including three in Lewistown. In the formal response you recently provided, you detail one fewer box removal in Lewistown. My office also received information that was subsequently reported by local press that numerous mail collection boxes were removed from Missoula, however, USPS has not disclosed any removed boxes from that city. These gaps in transparency are unacceptable. I ask that you provide the following details for the entire calendar year of 2020:

- The number of boxes that were removed across Montana, including a breakdown of business and residential boxes.
- The address of each box removed.
- The date each box was removed.

In August, your staff told my office that USPS plans to reinstate all residential boxes that were removed in Montana, but business boxes would not be replaced because they were purportedly duplicates. Yet in Shelby, this justification does not pass muster. There is one Post Office in Shelby, with two collection boxes inside the lobby, and one outside. The only other collection box in town was in the city center, between the Toole County Courthouse, Shelby City Hall, and the Toole County Library. I fail to see how this qualifies as a duplicate box, or how removing it would speed mail delivery operations in the region. I ask that you provide additional information as to how this decision was made, and why, per your response, it makes sense in a case like this to exclude public officials from the conversation.

Finally, I ask you to provide additional information about the density tests that informed USPS' box removal process. Your response noted that boxes are eligible for removal if they collect fewer than twenty five piece of mail per day, regardless of outside factors. If this is the extent of the process, it significantly misses the

JON TESTER
MONTANA

COMMITTEES:
APPROPRIATIONS
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VETERANS' AFFAIRS

SENATE HART BUILDING
SUITE 311
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
202-224-2644

tester.senate.gov/contact

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mark. In Bozeman, for example, several of the business boxes that were removed were located on the Montana State University (MSU) campus. It is not surprising that density tests conducted in June when there are very few students on the MSU campus would show these boxes aren't being highly trafficked as opposed to when school is in session. Additionally, as these tests were apparently conducted in the middle of a global pandemic that has dramatically altered the normal course of life across the country, I am skeptical that this information could produce an accurate assessment of whether a box was eligible to be removed. I ask that you provide the specific test information for the business boxes in Montana and how that information compares to any previous tests conducted in previous years.

I look forward to working with you to preserve this important service to the American people. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jon Tester". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Jon Tester

BILLINGS
(406) 252-0550

BOZEMAN
(406) 586-4450

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(406) 723-3277

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(406) 728-3003

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HELENA
(406) 449-5401

KALISPELL
(406) 257-3360