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United States Senate

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March 29, 2017

The Honorable Megan J. Brennan
Postmaster General and Chief Executive Officer
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Room 10804
Washington, DC 20260

Dear Postmaster General Brennan:

I write regarding a U.S. Postal Service Postal Inspection Service policy that poses a threat to the safety of approximately 600 Postal Police Officers across the country. Currently, these officers are ineligible from carrying their work-issued firearms in transit to and from their residence, significantly diminishing their safety while off duty. For that reason, I request that you work with the Chief Postal Inspector to modify the current policy and find a common sense way to allow Postal Police Officers to travel to and from their duty station with their service weapon.

Uniformed Postal Police Officers place themselves in harm's way every day to provide protections to postal facilities, employees, and customers. These law enforcement officers have the statutory authority to carry firearms, make arrests and receive advanced tactical training.

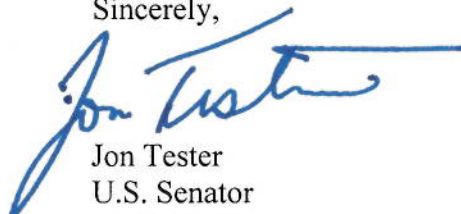
Ambushes committed against all uniformed officers remains the top cause of law enforcement felonious fatalities. In 2015, 50,212 law enforcement officers were assaulted of which 14,281 sustained serious physical injury and 51 died in the line of duty. Yet Postal Police Officers are not authorized to defend themselves as they travel to and from their duty location with their service weapon. It is my understanding that they must lock-up their government-issued firearm at their duty location at the end of their tour of duty and are prohibited from carrying any weapon on U.S. Postal Service property while off-duty.

As Postmaster General, you prescribe regulations necessary for the protection and administration of property owned or occupied by the Postal Service and persons on the property, including Postal Police Officers. According to the Postal Police Officer's Management Manual: "The service weapon will be carried *only* while on duty and will not be carried to and from the officer's residence. The only exception will be those instances where a security force member begins or ends a tour of duty at the officer's residence in a travel status." Similar agencies, including the VA Police and Federal Protective Service, do not have such restrictions to carry off-duty on federal agency property. It is difficult to see why these policies are not replicated for the Postal Service.

Addressing this issue not only enhances the safety and security of our Postal Police Officers, but also further protects civilians. As you know, the Postal Police Officers receive some of the best-specialized firearms training in the world. I encourage you to review their arming policy that focuses on their ability to arm off-duty.

I welcome the opportunity to work with you and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service to address this policy issue in order to better safeguard our country and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jon Tester", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jon Tester
U.S. Senator

CC: Chief Postal Inspector Guy Cottrell, U.S. Postal Inspection Service, U.S. Postal Service