

c/o Robert M Duncan
Chairman, United States Postal Service Board of Governors
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW Rm 10300
Washington DC 20260-1000
Cc: USPS Governors

Dear Postal Service Governors:

Welcome. The undersigned associations are delighted to have your leadership at the head of a most venerable institution that continues to drive a significant portion of American commerce and communication in the 21st Century. As representatives of the industries that comprise the broader postal ecosystem, we greatly appreciate your service and commitment. As such, we thought we might offer our perspective for your consideration as you chart the future direction of the Postal Service. Our members employ more than seven million Americans, account for \$1.4 trillion in annual sales, generate hundreds of billions of dollars in charitable giving, and inform, educate, and entertain the mail-receiving public. We generate more than 90% of the funding of universal postal services in the United States. Like USPS itself, our industry helps to bind the nation together as part of an extended supply chain that delivers crucial communication services. We collectively support virtually every sector of the US economy by facilitating the efficient distribution of information and goods to the 128 million American households it serves.

We write to you because our members are deeply concerned that undue reliance on raising prices to stabilize the Postal Service for the future would ultimately doom this important industry and undermine any comprehensive plan to address the Postal Service's difficulties. The challenge facing USPS, as you know, does not have only one dimension; costs, service, revenues, and the funding of the universal service obligation (USO) must all be addressed. Frankly, those advocating higher prices vastly underestimate the significant volume loss that unprecedented rate increases would produce. The catalog industry has never completely recovered from an outsized price increase in 2007 that initiated an accelerated volume decline that has now exceeded 40%. Since then the threat from digital substitutes to mail has intensified and our members consistently report that postage rates matter now more than ever. It is hard to cost cut one's way to profitability. Ultimately, new revenues must be found. While we recognize the need to enhance revenues from today's products and customers, new postal products, services and solutions are also critical.

The Postal Service faces a complex predicament requiring a comprehensive solution that reexamines some existing approaches; as we expect the Postal Service's Ten-Year Plan will do when it is released. It is critically important that this strategic examination include input from all key stakeholders. Historically, the Postal Service has thrived by collaborating with its supply chain partners and we are prepared to help. We are confident that by working together we can find efficiencies. With a Board quorum in place for the first time in years there is a unique chance to broaden focus and consider a range of solutions that utilize public-private partnership. We propose that the Board convene a meeting with the mailing and shipping industry, our supply chain, and representatives of the citizen mailer to consider our shared future and prioritize the efforts that can create a sustainable path forward for the Postal Service and the industry. We look forward to your response. Please contact Michael Plunkett, President & CEO, Association for Postal Commerce, as indicated below if you wish to reply directly or to request further information.

Respectfully submitted,

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