



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

February 2, 2022

Mr. Louis DeJoy
Postmaster General
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Room 10300
Washington, D.C. 20260

Dear Postmaster General DeJoy:

I am writing to urge the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) to fulfill its National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) responsibilities, improve its competitiveness, tackle the climate crisis, and address environmental injustice by accelerating the modernization and electrification of its delivery vehicle fleet through the procurement of its Next Generation Delivery Vehicle (NGDV).

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has communicated grave concerns with the adequacy of the environmental review that the USPS has conducted to date for its procurement of its NGDV, which EPA has detailed again today in a letter to your agency. Those concerns warrant further examination by USPS, and I join EPA in urging USPS to complete a supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) to remedy the deficiencies in the environmental impact statement. With some additional time and work, I am confident that the USPS can swiftly incorporate the kind of up-to-date information on electric vehicle technology, cost, and deployment that USPS's competitors are using to inform their own business decisions to electrify their fleets.

I will note, however, that the USPS's approach to its environmental review for the NGDV is also flawed in some ways that cannot be so easily remedied. For example, USPS issued the NGDV contract and reportedly committed more than \$480 million to begin engineering and factory construction *before* the agency began the environmental review for its procurement decision. The agency committed to walk down a path before looking to see where that path was leading. This approach conflicts with longstanding NEPA practice and law. USPS should evaluate the tools it has available to address this problem by considering actions to reduce environmental impacts, such as by working with the NGDV supplier on adjustments to ensure maximum feasible EV production.

EPA has identified the reasons that it finds the analysis to be deficient and what USPS must do to improve its analysis consistent with making sound decisions informed by accurate data. As an independent agency that is bound by NEPA, the responsibility now falls on the USPS to improve its NGDV environmental review and make a decision that is grounded on sound legal footing; if it does not do so, Congress or the Federal courts may compel USPS to alter course.

While I have the concerns outlined above, I also understand that NGDV presents a critical opportunity to harness modern clean technologies, reduce pollution, and sustain competitiveness over the coming decades. Through NGDV, USPS has the option to achieve 70 percent electrification of the delivery vehicle fleet by the end of this decade. This available pathway would put USPS in a position to achieve dramatically positive effects for public health, climate crisis, and American competitiveness. It would do so at a time when our international competitors are moving rapidly to electrify their transportation

systems, and leading U.S. companies, including major delivery companies, are rapidly advancing American competitiveness by electrifying their fleets and showing how the U.S. leads by example.

This transition to a modern, clean, and efficient USPS vehicle fleet is a top priority of the Biden Administration. To address the climate crisis, President Biden has called on us to seize the once-in-a-generation economic opportunity we have to create and sustain jobs, including well-paying union jobs; support a just transition to a more sustainable economy for American workers; strengthen America's communities; protect public health; and advance environmental justice. Procurement of NGDV can be a part of this economic opportunity. To assist the NGDV effort, the Administration strongly backs the \$6 billion dedicated to USPS in the Build Back Better Act that provides funding for charging infrastructure and battery electric vehicles. We seek to continue to provide technical resources to support the modernization of the USPS fleet through assets, such as the Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Lab, and continue to encourage collaboration across government agencies that are engaged in fleet transformation. We also strongly support USPS using its existing resources, including its significant cash reserves or through a credit strategy, to invest in our nations' health, environment and competitiveness. Through these approaches and others, we are confident that USPS has the tools it needs to act now.

I deeply appreciate the ongoing dedication of the NGDV team and the ongoing collaboration of USPS with my team. We will continue to do everything we can to support USPS fleet electrification efforts, including budgetary and technical assistance in addressing the issues I have discussed.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brenda Mallory". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Brenda Mallory
Chair

White House Council on Environmental Quality