

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 2, 2024

Postmaster General Louis DeJoy
USPS – Headquarters
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington DC 20260-0010

Dear Mr. DeJoy,

We strongly urge the United States Postal Service (USPS) to engage with industry and develop a strategy for how the USPS plans to administer the increased shipping of live chickens in the coming months.

The hatching industry plays a vital role in America's food supply and in feeding the world. Each year, hatcheries across the United States produce chickens, turkeys, ducks, and geese to then ship around the country for further development. Many hatcheries use the USPS to ship their newborn chicks to clients, such as feed stores, farmers, and poultry enthusiasts, oftentimes requiring flights to its destination. It is estimated that more than 50 million chickens get shipped on flights each year from hatcheries.

Earlier this year, after more than 20 years, the USPS announced it was switching from contracting with FedEx air cargo to using United Parcel Service (UPS). This change has caused concern and uncertainty for the hatching industry that relies on air cargo to ship their product around the country. Additionally, since the change was announced, companies have continued to use FedEx to ship live chickens, but according to some within the industry, FedEx's capacity, number of flights, and ability to handle the volume of chickens is not sufficient.

Lastly, there has been no clear indication whether UPS will be the main carrier that producers use to ship live chickens, and hatcheries have been given no assurances that they will have a viable shipping option as they approach their peak demand window, which typically runs from February through September. If there is not direction given on how live animals, specifically live chickens, will be shipped under this new contract, many in the industry are in peril.

We request a briefing from the USPS by no later than Friday, December 6th, to learn about what hatcheries can expect in future months, and regarding the following questions:

1. What is the USPS' strategy for timely delivery of chicks and other poultry as volume is expected to increase in the coming months?
2. What postal locations are available to receive chicks and other poultry?
3. How does the USPS plan to engage with industry to ensure business is not disrupted?
4. How did the USPS decide to add an additional \$15 surcharge to all live animals being shipped via the USPS?

We appreciate your attention to our request. It is imperative that hatcheries be provided clear expectations on how the shipping of live chickens across the country will proceed in light of this contract change.

Sincerely,



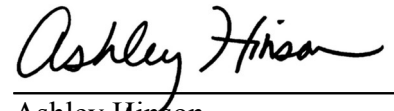
Randy Feenstra
Member of Congress



Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator



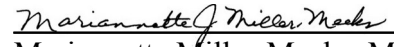
Joni K. Ernst
United States Senator



Ashley Hinson
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Mark Alford
Member of Congress



Mariannette Miller-Meeks, M.D.
Member of Congress



Zach Nunn
Member of Congress