

**Testimony before the Subcommittee on Financial Services and
General Government
Hearing on A Review of the FY 2022 Budget Request for the USPS Office of Inspector
General and USPS Service Issues**

My name is Karen Meyers and I am a resident of Baltimore, a retired teacher, and the majority owner of a small business started by my husband 29 years ago. Our business is to market bank checks to AFL-CIO union offices all over the country. Orders come to us online, by phone, or via the US Postal Service (approximately 1/3 of orders).

Over the past year but particularly the past 9-10 months, we have had many problems with mail delivery. A number of our customers have called to complain they haven't received their check orders when they had sent order forms in the mail weeks or even months before. But we had not received those orders. This caused strains in our relationships with customers who had come to expect a turnaround time of a week to 10 days from our receiving the order to their receiving their checks. In one particularly egregious example, a union office in Oakland, California, mailed an order form on February 25 of this year and we received it on June 10.

Our appeal for the unions is that we outsource the printing of our checks to a union check and business forms printer, making our relationship with them essential to the survival of our business. We receive their invoices in the mail and, in the past, have sent our payments to them in the mail. Here are some of the problems we have experienced because of poor service by the USPS:

- In April or May of last year a check for \$4000 written to them was stolen and cashed. It had been mailed at a post office and was going to a PO box so the theft is likely to have occurred within the postal system.
- In November the printing company complained that we had not paid a number of their invoices but we had never received them. In many cases, invoices arrived 4-5 weeks after being mailed, making our payments late.
- A check we sent in February to pay a number of invoices had not been received by the printer by April. We finally stopped payment on the check and began paying all our invoices online.
- We received an envelope of invoices this past week, on July 8, that had been mailed from Texas on May 17.

Had we not had a strong, multi-year relationship with our printing company and had they dropped us as customers, we would be out of business. We have solved the problem of delays in our payments to them by paying online but we still rely on the postal system to deliver their invoices to us.

In another instance, we received an invoice from our CPA whose office is located in Towson, 15 miles from our office in Middle River, for the preparation of our state and federal taxes. We mailed our payment immediately. But after two weeks they had not received the check so we put a stop payment on it and delivered a replacement check to their office in person. After another two weeks, they finally received the original check in the mail.

We have experienced problems with mail delivery in our personal lives as well. Christmas cards sent in mid-December trickled in between January and April. Thank you notes I sent to my daughter and her family in Cleveland in mid-October didn't arrive until March of this year. A priority mail package sent to my sister in Indiana in December took 11 days to reach her.

Our problems have been challenging but are insignificant compared to the hardships suffered by low-income seniors relying on the post office to deliver their Social Security payments. As a man from my church remarked to me, when Social Security payments arrive late and recipients can't pay their bills on time, it can have a detrimental effect on good credit ratings that may have taken a lifetime to build.