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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

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February 26, 2021

Postmaster General Louis DeJoy
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20260

Board of Governors
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20260

Dear Postmaster General DeJoy and Governors of the United States Postal Service:

On February 23, the United States Postal Service (USPS) announced the final award of its contract for the Next Generation Delivery Vehicle (NGDV). I write to request details about this award and urge the Postal Service to prioritize the acquisition of electric vehicles, in order to ensure the NGDV fleet is sustainable for the Postal Service and for our environment.

The Postal Service is long overdue for a replacement of its aging and dangerous delivery vehicle fleet. This acquisition has been many years in the making, beginning in 2015 and stalling many times along the way. I appreciate the urgent need for these vehicles, given that 140,000 vehicles in the current fleet are past their expected lifespan, do not have basic features like air conditioning, have suffered over 170 vehicle fires, and cost USPS over \$706 million in maintenance annually.¹ However, this acquisition must also reflect the urgent need to invest in electric vehicle technology, in keeping with emerging industry trends, to make the fleet more cost-effective and maximize its long-term benefits.

The announced award, to Oshkosh Defense, provides for an initial acquisition of 50,000 custom-built vehicles, of which a portion will be electric vehicles and a portion will have internal combustion engines. USPS specified, "The vehicles will be equipped with either fuel-efficient internal combustion engines or battery electric powertrains and can be retrofitted to keep pace with advances in electric vehicle technologies." USPS will order up to 165,000 vehicles over 10 years. USPS estimates the first NGDVs will appear on carrier routes in 2023.²

The award announcement leaves many questions unanswered about the Postal Service's commitment to a sustainable fleet and how it can ensure maximum investment in electric vehicle technology. Please answer the following questions by March 5, 2021:

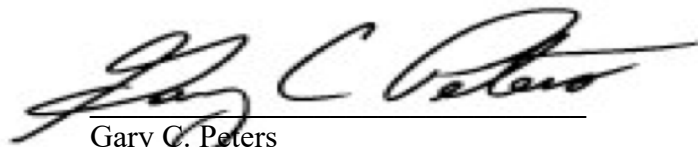
¹ U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General, *Delivery Vehicle Acquisition Strategy* (19-002-R20) (Aug 12, 2020) (<https://www.uspsoig.gov/sites/default/files/document-library-files/2020/19-002-R20.pdf>); Postal Times, *Postal Vehicle Fires* (accessed Feb. 24, 2021) (<https://www.postaltimes.com/postal-vehicle-fires>).

² U.S. Postal Service, *U.S. Postal Service Awards Contract to Launch Multi-Billion-Dollar Modernization of Postal Delivery Vehicle Fleet* (Feb. 23, 2021) (<https://about.usps.com/newsroom/national-releases/2021/0223-multi-billion-dollar-modernization-of-postal-delivery-vehicle-fleet.htm>).

1. Of the initial acquisition of 50,000 vehicles, how many electric vehicles does USPS currently plan to acquire? What is the current production schedule?
2. Has USPS leadership planned for multiple scenarios with minimum and maximum investments in electric vehicles, and what conditions are these scenarios based on?
3. What would USPS need, including additional resources or infrastructure support, to provide for an initial tranche of vehicles in which a majority (at least 50%) are electric vehicles?
4. What would USPS need, including additional resources or infrastructure support, to provide for a delivery vehicle fleet that consists entirely of electric vehicles by 2031?
5. Will the electric vehicle model be ready for manufacturing and on the streets by 2023? Under what conditions could USPS provide these vehicles more quickly?
6. What is the lifecycle cost of the electric model compared to the internal combustion model, taking into account maintenance and fueling or charging costs?
7. What is the cost of “retrofitting” or converting an internal combustion vehicle, and how much more costly is this approach than acquiring an electric vehicle initially?
8. How will the electric vehicle model, as well as the internal combustion model, comply USPS’s Buy American Policy? Please explain in full, including a description of the suppliers, sourcing of components, and manufacturing.

I urge the Postal Service to acquire a safe and sustainable vehicle fleet, and I stand ready to support that effort. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary C. Peters", written over a horizontal line.

Gary C. Peters
Chairman