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[castor.house.gov](http://castor.house.gov)

August 18, 2023

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

RE: Urgent need to update USPS delivery vehicles in Tampa Bay region

Dear Postmaster General DeJoy,

I write to you and local Postmasters on behalf of the more than 3,000 Letter Carriers employed by the United States Postal Service (USPS) who serve in St. Petersburg and the Tampa Bay region. It has been brought to my attention that many Letter Carriers operate outdated delivery trucks without functioning air conditioning. The Tampa Bay region and its residents just lived through the hottest July on record and have already experienced multiple heat advisories in August with no end in sight. The heat index regularly exceeds 100 degrees due to oppressive humidity. I am very concerned with the impact of heat stress on my neighbors who work outside including our Letter Carriers. Every corner of our community relies on consistent delivery from the USPS, and we must provide safe working environments, including air-conditioned vehicles, for Letter Carriers.

The devastating health and economic consequences of the climate crisis continue to grow, and the Tampa Bay region is particularly at risk for extreme heat and worsening air quality on hot, humid days. We need to take swift action and use every tool at our disposal to strengthen communities' — and workers' — resilience against such extreme heat and weather events. You may be aware of the recent Teamsters-UPS North American contract negotiations where the Teamsters collectively bargained for fair wages, safe working conditions, affordable health care and increased retirement benefits. The tentative agreement would mandate equipping the company's fleet of vehicles with air conditioning, new heat shields, and additional fans. These terms should be extended to all delivery service employees.

Moreover, USPS must expedite its key role to mitigate greenhouse gas pollution and avoid higher costs driven by the climate crisis. I am pleased that the landmark Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) included \$3 billion to electrify the USPS delivery fleet. This investment will help USPS adopt a modernization plan to roll out 66,000 electric delivery vehicles and tens of thousands of charging stations through 2028, with a target of acquiring only EVs after 2026<sup>[1]</sup>. USPS has announced its priority to provide carriers and communities with safer, more efficient vehicles that feature air-conditioning and advanced safety technology more suited to modern day operations<sup>[2]</sup>. I urge you to speed these modern vehicles to the Tampa Bay region.

USPS Letter Carriers play an essential role every day in delivering critical products across the country and keeping the American economy afloat. Letter Carriers and postal workers labored throughout the COVID-19 pandemic to move an invaluable amount of goods that kept American families safe, connected, healthy, and fed. Electrifying the USPS delivery fleet will help strengthen our postal network, support our postal workers, create new good-paying jobs, expand lower cost clean energy, and preserve the reliable, nationwide mail service that Tampa Bay families and small businesses rely on. I encourage you to move swiftly implement a plan to electrify the Tampa Bay mail delivery fleet, and in the interim guarantee the health and safety of Letter Carriers during the months of extreme heat.

Sincerely,



Kathy Castor  
Member of Congress

cc: Jesse H. Davis Jr., St. Petersburg Postmaster General  
Jacquelyn Villemaire, Tampa Postmaster General

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<sup>[1]</sup> <sup>[1]</sup> Stephanie Mlot, "USPS to Use Billions in Federal Funds to Electrify Delivery Fleet," PCMAG, December 21, 2022, <https://www.pcmag.com/news/usps-to-use-billions-in-federal-funds-to-electrify-delivery-fleet>.

<sup>[2]</sup> <sup>[2]</sup> United States Postal Service, "USPS Intends to Deploy over 66,000 Electric Vehicles by 2028, Making One of the Largest Electric Vehicle Fleets in the Nation - Newsroom," Newsroom - About.usps.com, December 20, 2022, <https://about.usps.com/newsroom/national-releases/2022/1220-usps-intends-to-deploy-over-66000-electric-vehicles-by-2028.htm>.