

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 12, 2018

The Honorable Megan Brennan
Postmaster General of the United States
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington, DC 20260

Dear Postmaster General Brennan:

We write to express our concerns and extreme disappointment in the United States Postal Service's (USPS) handling of mail and package services to the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) following Hurricanes Irma and Maria. The territory has experienced significant delays in services since the hurricanes. Post offices on all three islands remained closed for months and the destroyed mail facility in Frederiksted remained unremediated for over a month, despite much needed removal of stagnant water and debris.

In the aftermath of the hurricanes, Congresswoman Stacey E. Plaskett had multiple conversations with the USPS about restoring timely mail delivery to the territory.

On or about October 26, 2017, she had a telephone conversation with Deputy Postmaster General Stroman. Deputy Postmaster Stroman indicated that USPS hired an additional 200 individuals to eliminate the backlog in Puerto Rico and had entered into a contract to have the mail to the USVI sorted in Miami instead of Puerto Rico. Mr. Stroman assured Congresswoman Plaskett that these measures would minimize delays.

However, significant mail delivery delays have persisted and raise questions about the adequacy of the steps taken by USPS.

For instance, it has come to Congresswoman Plaskett's attention that temporary workers hired to help eliminate the backlog have already been released, despite a continuing backlog. According to an email from the USPS Government Relations Liaison, hundreds of temporary employees hired to assist with eliminating the massive backlog have already been let go.¹

Restoring mail and package service is vital. With telephone and internet services still disrupted for many in the territory, USPS is the primary means of communication and commerce for the USVI. The residents of the USVI should not have to accept continuing substandard

¹ Email from Z.Colicelli, Government Relations Liaison, United States Post Office, to Angeline Jabbar, Legislative Director, Office of Congresswoman Stacy E. Plaskett (VI) (Jan. 29, 2018).

service and we respectfully request that USPS implement a plan of action that will reduce the mail backlog and restore the mail delivery time to the USVI to standard operations comparable to other U.S. jurisdictions.

We request that you, or a senior member of your staff, brief the House Oversight and Government Committee no later than February 14, 2018, about the causes of continuing delays in restoring mail delivery to the USVI, USPS's justification for releasing temporary employees hired to help eliminate the backlog, and the plan moving forward to ensure residents of the USVI receive their mail in a timely manner.

We also ask that you provide the following documents and communications no later than February 20, 2018:

1. All documents and communications related to the routing of USVI mail through Miami, including communications between USPS employees and with individuals outside of the USPS in the aftermath of Hurricanes Irma and Maria;
2. all documents and communications related to the work and subsequent release of USPS temporary workers assisting with the delivery of mail to the USVI in the aftermath of Hurricanes Irma and Maria; and
3. all documents and communications related to any USPS plan to deliver mail to the USVI in the aftermath of Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

Please deliver to Congresswoman Stacey E. Plaskett's office at 331 Cannon House Office Building. If you have any questions or concerns please contact Ms. Angeline Jabbar with Rep. Plaskett's staff at (202) 225-1790 or Angeline.Jabbar@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

Matthew A. Carter

Casper B. Moore

W. H. A.

Wm. Lang Day

James Cannon

Jimmy Gandy

John S. Lytle

John D. Kelly

Peter W. ...

Mark ...