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**Grace Meng**

**Congress of the United States**

**Sixth District, New York**

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December 13, 2022

Mr. Frank Calabrese  
District Manager  
United States Postal Service  
160 Duryea Road  
Melville, NY 11747

Dear Mr. Calabrese,

I write to respectfully request that you consider expanding procedures meant to protect mail from relay box theft in my 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional District located in Queens, New York.

As you know, my constituents continue to experience the consequences of a surge in mail theft from dark green relay mailboxes. The safety of my constituents' mail would be greatly benefited by the expansion of procedures that require letter carriers to notify their post office when they have arrived at a relay box to have the mail deposited. Currently, mail is deposited into relay boxes independent of the letter carrier. These new procedures, which the United States Postal Service (USPS) has implemented on a limited basis, reduce the time mail spends in a relay box thus, reducing the risk of theft.

I also encourage the USPS to continue improving the physical security of relay boxes. I applaud the recent implementation of additional locks to prevent theft and urge you to consider expanding these upgrades to all relay boxes in my district. Without these additional locks, relay boxes remain an easy target for theft. I respectfully ask the USPS to provide my office with a briefing on the extent of these retrofitting efforts in my district.

Finally, I encourage the USPS to continue in its obligation to notify the affected public when it is evident that a mailbox or relay box has been breached. When mail is stolen, time is of the essence, and a notification from the USPS can give victims the edge to combat fraud. Especially during the holiday season, I encourage the USPS to make this practice a priority.

Mail theft is a serious crime with dire consequences for its victims. Criminals can steal identities, remove money from bank accounts, and more. And mail theft has increasingly put postal employees at risk. Letter carriers have been the victims of violent robberies in New York City and across the country.<sup>1</sup> In some instances, carriers have been targeted specifically for their

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nbcwashington.com/investigations/thousands-of-postal-carriers-assaulted-or-robbed-since-2020-usps-data/3057513/>

arrow keys, which can open several relay boxes in a given area. We ask a great deal of letter carriers. After years of risking their lives through multiple waves of the COVID-19 pandemic, continuing to persist no matter what, it is unacceptable that letter carriers now fear being attacked on the job. It is paramount for the USPS to protect letter carriers and the mail they deliver. USPS's failure to do so jeopardizes the trust the American people have put in them.

I appreciate your immediate attention to this matter. I look forward to your response detailing a course of action to prevent mail theft in my district. If you have any questions, you may contact Tom Dinegar of my staff ([Tom.Dinegar@mail.house.gov](mailto:Tom.Dinegar@mail.house.gov)).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Grace Meng", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Grace Meng  
Member of Congress