



April 22, 2021

The Honorable Gary Peters
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security
& Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rob Portman
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security
& Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Peters and Ranking Member Portman

I am writing on behalf of the National Retail Federation (NRF) to share our concerns with widespread delays in shipments of live baby chicks. As the Committee considers the nominations of three new Board of Governors of the U.S. Postal Service (USPS), we urge committee members to stress the need for swift action by USPS leadership to address these significant and harmful delays.

NRF, the world's largest retail trade association, passionately advocates for the people, brands, policies and ideas that help retail thrive. From its headquarters in Washington, D.C., NRF empowers the industry that powers the economy. Retail is the nation's largest private-sector employer, contributing \$3.9 trillion to annual GDP and supporting one in four U.S. jobs — 52 million working Americans. For over a century, NRF has been a voice for every retailer and every retail job, educating, inspiring and communicating the powerful impact retail has on local communities and global economies.

The Postal Service has been delivering live baby chicks since 1918 to American businesses, farms and families. The agency is also the only carrier in the country that delivers live chicks. According to USPS regulations (USPS Publication 52, Section 526.32 and Exhibit 526.33), live chicks that have been hatched for less than 24 hours must be delivered to its final destination within 72 hours of hatching, and shippers have successfully used USPS to safely deliver newly hatched chicks to their final destination in a timely fashion for over 100 years.

Recent failures to prioritize these shipments, however, have led to an alarming number of dead or dying chicks being delivered. Our members report that the normal 48-to-72-hour service standard for live chicks has increased to over 72 hours, or even 120 hours in many cases. After hatching, chicks can only survive on the yolk they absorb during incubation for three days, so the delays are costly and highly disturbing for shippers and retailers.

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USPS must prioritize the shipment of live chicks as it has previously done for the past 100 years. The recent delays have resulted in the waste of animal resources, decreased revenues for retailers, increased costs for hatcheries and the disruption of the nation's food supply chain. USPS leadership should investigate and correct the issues causing the delays and provide the dependable delivery of chicks to all who rely on them.

Thank you, and we look forward to working with you on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David French".

David French
Senior Vice President
Government Relations

cc: Senate Committee on Homeland Security &
Governmental Affairs