

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 19, 2020

David Cordani
President and CEO
Cigna Corporation
900 Cottage Grove Road
Bloomfield, CT 06002

Tim Wentworth
President
Express Scripts and Cigna Services
900 Cottage Grove Road
Bloomfield, CT 06002

Dear Mr. Cordani and Mr. Wentworth:

We write today to request information regarding any delays in mail-order deliveries of medications as a result of operational changes at the United States Postal Services (USPS). Millions of Americans with diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease, asthma, and other chronic conditions, illnesses or health care needs rely on the USPS for delivery of their prescription drugs and are at grave risks if President Trump's efforts to degrade mail service results in delays and disruptions. These health threats are magnified by the ongoing pandemic.

Troubling reports indicate that "the mail system is being undercut in ways set in motion by Mr. Trump,"¹ and that this is resulting in significant delays for every type of mail – including life-saving prescription drugs for seniors, veterans, and millions of other patients. According to a report from the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, for example, "Neighborhoods across the Philadelphia region are experiencing significant delays in receiving their mail, with some residents going upwards of three weeks without packages and letters, leaving them without medication, paychecks, and bills."² Senators have also received reports from veterans and staff at the Department of Veterans Affairs that mail-order medications are "often taking weeks to be

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delivered and causing veterans to miss doses of vital medications.”³ According to the *New York Times*, patients were facing weeks-long mail delays, forcing them to skip needed medications.⁴

In 2019, over 170 million prescriptions were filled by mail in the United States.⁵ The potential impact of USPS delays on mail-order deliveries of medications may be even higher during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic because more patients have sought socially distant ways to access medical care. Preliminary data suggests that “[d]uring the last week of March, mail-order prescriptions grew 21% from the previous year”—bringing the mail-order prescription’s share of the prescription drug market to the highest portion in the last two years.⁶ Pharmaceutical companies, including Eli Lilly and Pfizer Inc., have also reported an increase in mail shipments during the public health emergency.⁷ Major chain pharmacies have also indicated an increase in their mail-order prescription deliveries: Walgreens pharmacies has seen a 15% increase in home-delivery customers and 20% increase in volume of mail-order pharmacies since the beginning of 2020⁸ and CVS “saw a 10-fold increase in pharmacy home deliveries during the first-three months of this year.”⁹ Yesterday, Postmaster General Louis DeJoy announced that he would suspend his changes to postal operations until after the election.¹⁰ But this vague statement did not allay our concerns: it is unclear if he will reverse changes that have already been made, or if he will fully resume all operations and eliminate and prevent further mail service delays.

Given the urgent and ongoing concerns about the adverse impacts of Trump Administration policies on the quality and efficiency of the Postal Service and the implications of these policy changes for Americans across the country, we ask that you please provide the following information by no later than August 26, 2020:

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2. What percentage of these prescriptions are handled by the USPS?

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3. What are the risks for patients if the USPS cannot deliver these drugs in a timely fashion?
4. How, if at all, has the COVID-19 pandemic affected the quantity of mail order prescriptions being filled?
5. Have you received patient complaints regarding delayed delivery of mail order prescriptions? If so, what is the nature of these complaints and how many of these complaints have been received, by month, since the beginning of calendar year 2020?
6. What is the average delivery time for mail order prescriptions filled by your company, for calendar year 2019, and for each month of calendar year 2020? Please provide any data regarding delivery times for mail-order prescriptions filled by your company, and how trends in these delivery times may have changed over the course of 2020.
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10. Has your company received any communication from USPS since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic regarding the possibility for delays in the delivery of medication? If so, please provide copies of those communications.

Sincerely,

/s/ Elizabeth Warren
Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

/s/ Robert P. Casey Jr.
Robert P. Casey Jr.
United States Senator

CC:

JC Scott
President and Chief Executive Officer
Pharmaceutical Care Management Association
325 7th Street NW, Suite 900
Washington, D.C. 20004

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 19, 2020

Larry J. Merlo
President and Chief Executive Officer
CVS Health
One CVS Drive
Woonsocket, RI 02895

Dear Mr. Merlo:

We write today to request information regarding any delays in mail-order deliveries of medications as a result of operational changes at the United States Postal Services (USPS). Millions of Americans with diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease, asthma, and other chronic conditions, illnesses or health care needs rely on the USPS for delivery of their prescription drugs and are at grave risks if President Trump's efforts to degrade mail service results in delays and disruptions. These health threats are magnified by the ongoing pandemic.

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In 2019, over 170 million prescriptions were filled by mail in the United States.⁵ The potential impact of USPS delays on mail-order deliveries of medications may be even higher during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic because more patients have sought socially distant ways to access medical care. Preliminary data suggests that “[d]uring the last week of March, mail-order prescriptions grew 21% from the previous year”—bringing the mail-order prescription’s share of the prescription drug market to the highest portion in the last two years.⁶ Pharmaceutical companies, including Eli Lilly and Pfizer Inc., have also reported an increase in mail shipments during the public health emergency.⁷ Major chain pharmacies have also indicated an increase in their mail-order prescription deliveries: Walgreens pharmacies has seen a 15% increase in home-delivery customers and 20% increase in volume of mail-order pharmacies since the beginning of 2020⁸ and CVS “saw a 10-fold increase in pharmacy home deliveries during the first-three months of this year.”⁹ Yesterday, Postmaster General Louis DeJoy announced that he would suspend his changes to postal operations until after the election.¹⁰ But this vague statement did not allay our concerns: it is unclear if he will reverse changes that have already been made, or if he will fully resume all operations and eliminate and prevent further mail service delays.

Given the urgent and ongoing concerns about the adverse impacts of Trump Administration policies on the quality and efficiency of the Postal Service and the implications of these policy changes for Americans across the country, we ask that you please provide the following information by no later than August 26, 2020:

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2. What percentage of these prescriptions are handled by the USPS?
3. What are the risks for patients if the USPS cannot deliver these drugs in a timely fashion?
4. How, if at all, has the COVID-19 pandemic affected the quantity of mail order prescriptions being filled?
5. Have you received patient complaints regarding delayed delivery of mail order prescriptions? If so, what is the nature of these complaints and how many of these complaints have been received, by month, since the beginning of calendar year 2020?

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Sincerely,

/s/ Elizabeth Warren
Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

/s/ Robert P. Casey Jr.
Robert P. Casey Jr.
United States Senator

CC:

JC Scott
President and Chief Executive Officer
Pharmaceutical Care Management Association
325 7th Street NW, Suite 900
Washington, D.C. 20004

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 19, 2020

Bruce D. Broussard
Chief Executive Officer
Humana, Inc.
500 W Main Street
Louisville, KY 40202

Dear Mr. Broussard:

We write today to request information regarding any delays in mail-order deliveries of medications as a result of operational changes at the United States Postal Services (USPS). Millions of Americans with diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease, asthma, and other chronic conditions, illnesses or health care needs rely on the USPS for delivery of their prescription drugs and are at grave risks if President Trump's efforts to degrade mail service results in delays and disruptions. These health threats are magnified by the ongoing pandemic.

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Sincerely,

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CC:

JC Scott
President and Chief Executive Officer
Pharmaceutical Care Management Association
325 7th Street NW, Suite 900
Washington, D.C. 20004

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 19, 2020

David S. Wichmann
Chief Executive Officer
UnitedHealth Group
P.O. Box 1459
Minneapolis, MN 55440

Wyatt W. Decker
Chief Executive Officer
OptumHealth
11000 Optum Circle
Eden Prairie, MN 55344

Dear Mr. Wichmann and Mr. Decker:

We write today to request information regarding any delays in mail-order deliveries of medications as a result of operational changes at the United States Postal Services (USPS). Millions of Americans with diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease, asthma, and other chronic conditions, illnesses or health care needs rely on the USPS for delivery of their prescription drugs and are at grave risks if President Trump's efforts to degrade mail service results in delays and disruptions. These health threats are magnified by the ongoing pandemic.

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United States Senator

CC:

JC Scott
President and Chief Executive Officer
Pharmaceutical Care Management Association
325 7th Street NW, Suite 900
Washington, D.C. 20004

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 19, 2020

James Skinner
Executive Chairman
Walgreens Boots Alliance, Inc.
108 Wilmot Road
Deerfield, IL 60015

Alex Gourlay
Co-Chief Operating Officer
Walgreens Boots Alliance, Inc.
108 Wilmot Road
Deerfield, IL 60015

Dear Mr. Skinner and Mr. Gourlay:

We write today to request information regarding any delays in mail-order deliveries of medications as a result of operational changes at the United States Postal Services (USPS). Millions of Americans with diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease, asthma, and other chronic conditions, illnesses or health care needs rely on the USPS for delivery of their prescription drugs and are at grave risks if President Trump's efforts to degrade mail service results in delays and disruptions. These health threats are magnified by the ongoing pandemic.

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² Philadelphia Inquirer, "Mail delays are frustrating Philly residents, and a short-staffed Postal Service is struggling to keep up," August 2, 2020, <https://www.inquirer.com/news/philadelphia/usps-tracking-in-transit-late-mail-delivery-philadelphia-packages-postal-service-20200802.html>.

delivered and causing veterans to miss doses of vital medications.”³ According to the *New York Times*, patients were facing weeks-long mail delays, forcing them to skip needed medications.⁴

In 2019, over 170 million prescriptions were filled by mail in the United States.⁵ The potential impact of USPS delays on mail-order deliveries of medications may be even higher during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic because more patients have sought socially distant ways to access medical care. Preliminary data suggests that “[d]uring the last week of March, mail-order prescriptions grew 21% from the previous year”—bringing the mail-order prescription’s share of the prescription drug market to the highest portion in the last two years.⁶ Pharmaceutical companies, including Eli Lilly and Pfizer Inc., have also reported an increase in mail shipments during the public health emergency.⁷ Major chain pharmacies have also indicated an increase in their mail-order prescription deliveries: Walgreens pharmacies has seen a 15% increase in home-delivery customers and 20% increase in volume of mail-order pharmacies since the beginning of 2020⁸ and CVS “saw a 10-fold increase in pharmacy home deliveries during the first-three months of this year.”⁹ Yesterday, Postmaster General Louis DeJoy announced that he would suspend his changes to postal operations until after the election.¹⁰ But this vague statement did not allay our concerns: it is unclear if he will reverse changes that have already been made, or if he will fully resume all operations and eliminate and prevent further mail service delays.

Given the urgent and ongoing concerns about the adverse impacts of Trump Administration policies on the quality and efficiency of the Postal Service and the implications of these policy changes for Americans across the country, we ask that you please provide the following information by no later than August 26, 2020:

1. Please provide the number of mail order prescriptions that your company has filled each month since January 1, 2020. Please include the number of patients served by these prescriptions and any available aggregate age, gender, and demographic information.
2. What percentage of these prescriptions are handled by the USPS?

³ Letter from United States Senators to Postmaster General DeJoy, August 13, 2020, https://www.veterans.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/200813_Letter_USPSdelaysveteranprescriptions.pdf; CNN, “US Postal Service delays force Department of Veterans Affairs to shift prescription delivery methods,” Zachary Cohen, August 18, 2020, <https://www.cnn.com/2020/08/18/politics/veterans-affairs-us-postal-service-prescription-delays>.

⁴ *New York Times*, “Postal Crisis Ripples Across Nation as Election Looms,” Luke Broadwater, Jack Healy, Michael D. Shear, and Hailey Fuchs, August 15, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/15/us/post-office-vote-by-mail.html>.

⁵ Kaiser Family Foundation, “Number of Mail Order Prescription Drugs Per Capita,” <https://www.kff.org/health-costs/state-indicator/number-of-mail-order-prescription-drugs-per-capita/?currentTimeframe=0&sortModel=%7B%22colId%22:%22Mail%20Order%20Rx%20Drugs%20Per%20Capita%22,%22sort%22:%22desc%22%7D>.

⁶ *Wall Street Journal*, “Mail-order drug delivery rises during coronavirus lockdowns,” Jared S. Hopkins, May 12, 2020, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/mail-order-drug-delivery-rises-during-coronavirus-lockdowns-11589281203>.

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ *Politico*, “DeJoy suspends Postal Service changes amid election fears,” Zach Montellaro and Daniel Lippman, August 18, 2020, <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/08/18/dejoy-suspends-usps-changes-under-pressure-397765>.

3. What are the risks for patients if the USPS cannot deliver these drugs in a timely fashion?
4. How, if at all, has the COVID-19 pandemic affected the quantity of mail order prescriptions being filled?
5. Have you received patient complaints regarding delayed delivery of mail order prescriptions? If so, what is the nature of these complaints and how many of these complaints have been received, by month, since the beginning of calendar year 2020?
6. What is the average delivery time for mail order prescriptions filled by your company, for calendar year 2019, and for each month of calendar year 2020? Please provide any data regarding delivery times for mail-order prescriptions filled by your company, and how trends in these delivery times may have changed over the course of 2020.
7. Do you have a goal or standard for reasonable delivery time for mail order prescription drugs? If so, what percentage of shipments met this standard in calendar year 2019? What percentage of shipments met this standard for each month of calendar year 2020?
8. Have you experienced recent increases in USPS shipping costs for mail-order prescription drugs, and if so, what is the magnitude of those cost increases?
9. What changes, if any, has your company recently made to its business practices to ensure that mail order prescriptions are delivered to customers on time? Have these changes resulted in your company making unanticipated expenditures?
10. Has your company received any communication from USPS since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic regarding the possibility for delays in the delivery of medication? If so, please provide copies of those communications.

Sincerely,

/s/ Elizabeth Warren
Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

/s/ Robert P. Casey Jr.
Robert P. Casey Jr.
United States Senator

CC:

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