

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 13, 2022

Mr. Gary R. Barksdale
Chief Postal Inspector
U.S. Postal Inspection Service
433 W Harrison St., Room 3255
Chicago, IL 60699-3255

Dear Chief Barksdale:

I write today to draw your attention to recent reporting of check washing and mail theft in the Atlanta area. According to a March 21, 2022 report by CBS46, multiple Atlanta residents have had their checks stolen from U.S. Postal Service (USPS) collection boxes. These checks were then altered and cashed, costing these Georgians over \$3,000. This reporting also described how one resident had her passport stolen from an envelope that she dropped off inside the Duluth Post Office. And these are only the cases that have been publicly reported so far.

I am extremely concerned that bad actors are stealing from hardworking Georgia families and may be doing so through vulnerabilities within USPS. I write to request that the U.S. Postal Inspection Service prioritize any investigations into allegations of check washing and mail theft in the Atlanta area and to provide a full briefing to me and my staff on your work to address and prevent illegal activity. To that end, I also ask that you provide a response to the following questions by August 12, 2022:

1. How many complaints of check washing or mail theft has the USPS received surrounding the Atlanta metro area since the COVID-19 pandemic began?
 - a. Does this number represent an increase from previous years?
2. How many of these complaints have resulted in investigations?
 - a. How many of these investigations are currently open?
 - b. How many have been closed?
3. How many arrests, if any, have been made as a result of these complaints?
4. What steps is USPS taking to prevent mail theft and check-washing going forward?

Sincerely,



Reverend Raphael Warnock
United States Senator