

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 27, 2022

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

Ms. Tammy Whitcomb Hull  
Inspector General  
U.S. Postal Service  
1735 North Lynn Street  
Arlington, VA 22209-2020

Dear Chief Barksdale and Inspector General Hull:

I write today to draw your attention to reports of mail theft and check washing in Dunwoody, Georgia, and to urge you to immediately prioritize any investigations into these incidents.

My office has recently heard alarming reports from Dunwoody Mayor Lynn Deutsch, Chief of Police Billy Grogan, and Dunwoody residents regarding mail theft and fraud. According to Chief Grogan, the Dunwoody Police Department has received reports of nearly fifty incidents since just September related to check washing and/or mail theft in the Dunwoody area. This represents a significant increase from past years. Recent reporting has also highlighted these critical issues.<sup>1</sup>

My office has also spoken with residents who have been directly targeted by these bad actors. One man mailed a check for everyday expenses using the postal drop box outside the Dunwoody Post Office at 1551 Dunwoody Village Pkwy, Atlanta, GA 30338. Criminal actors altered and then attempted to cash the check for over \$9,800. Another small business owner tried to mail a check inside the same facility to pay local excise taxes. Her checks were also altered and criminal actors attempted to cash one for over \$8,500.

In a particularly egregious case, one woman mailed three checks from the Dunwoody Post Office. Two weeks later, one of the checks was fraudulently used to illegally obtain over \$9,000 from her account. The other two checks never arrived at their destination, suggesting they may also have been stolen. As a result, this woman had to close her bank account of over a decade and open a new one, requiring her to also change the routing information for every bill and auto-payment she had ever set up.

These are only a handful of what my office understands to be dozens of incidents in recent months.

I am deeply disturbed that bad actors are attempting to steal thousands of dollars from hardworking Georgia families and may be doing so through security issues within USPS. Families depend every day on the USPS for essential services, and it is unacceptable that their savings may be at risk after they drop off a check for everyday expenses at their local post office.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.fox5atlanta.com/news/the-checks-are-in-the-mail-and-thieves-are-swiping-them>;  
<https://www.wsbradio.com/news/local/thieves-have-stolen-250000-worth-checks-metro-post-office/CKY4YKWAC5FXHI5GOKL7ZLTBKY>.

I understand that both the U.S. Postal Inspection Service and USPS Office of the Inspector General are aware of incidents related to the Dunwoody Post Office.<sup>2</sup> I ask that you immediately prioritize any investigations related to the Dunwoody Post Office and provide a full briefing to me and my staff on the status of these investigations. To that end, I also ask that you respond to the following questions by November 30, 2022:

1. How many complaints of check washing or mail theft has the Postal Inspection Service or Office of the Inspector General received related to the Dunwoody Post Office?
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 because of these complaints?
4. What operational changes has USPS made or is planning to make at the Dunwoody Post Office location or other area facilities to address check washing or mail theft? While I understand that the investigation is ongoing, are there any immediate steps that USPS can take to address these incidents?

Sincerely,



Reverend Raphael Warnock  
United States Senator

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<sup>2</sup> See also <https://reporternewspapers.net/2022/08/18/multiple-people-report-missing-checks-in-dunwoody>.