

**Testimony of Frank Albergo
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House Subcommittee on Governmental Operations

**Field Hearing on “Delivering for Pennsylvania: Examining Postal
Service Delivery and Operations from the Cradle of Liberty”**

**Philadelphia, PA
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Good morning, Chairman Connolly and the other members attending today’s hearing. On behalf of the nation’s Postal Police Officers, we thank you for calling attention to the dramatic rise in mail theft experienced by so many Americans, as well as an equally disturbing trend in violent crimes perpetrated against postal employees.

We thank you for soliciting the views of Postal Police Officers. As law enforcement officers whose primary job is preventing and responding to postal-related crime, we hope our experience and our recommendations will prove useful as you seek viable solutions to these problems.

First and foremost, we believe that Postal Police Officers should be returned to the streets to help prevent postal-related crime. We are trained for this and we performed this work for decades, until the Postal Service eliminated all proactive postal police crime-prevention patrols in 2020. As far as we know, the Postal

Service is the only government agency to actively defund its uniformed police force, and it's happening now — in the middle of a postal crime wave.

Background

My name is Frank Albergo and I serve as the National President of the Postal Police Officers Association (PPOA). The PPOA represents uniformed Postal Police Officers employed by the United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS)—the law enforcement, crime prevention, and security arm of the United States Postal Service (USPS).

The Postal Police Force began at this very location—Philadelphia's Temple University—which on December 9, 1970, graduated the first class of thirty [30] Postal Police Officers, including one female officer, from its basic training academy.

That was more than half a century ago. Those initial officers then referred to as "Postal Security Technicians"—were then immediately followed by a second class of 58 officers. All 88 of those officers were then assigned to the Philadelphia Division of the Postal Inspection Service.

By 1972, there were 1,616 officers assigned to 59 postal facilities across the United States. By 1975, there were 2,452 officers deployed to 122 postal facilities across 66 American cities. Postal Police operations even included five [5] K-9 Teams. According to Postal Service historical records, these new Postal Police Officers paid immediate dividends; wherever these officers were deployed, assaults on postal workers and reports of mail theft all but disappeared.

Back in the 1970's, the primary mission of the Postal Police Force was to prevent crime at postal facilities. However, even then, PPOs were frequently deployed to patrol letter-carrier routes and locations where blue collection boxes were at risk. Indeed, the 1973 Postal Inspection Service Annual Report states:

“Because of mounting postal crimes in two major cities, particularly assault on postal employees, the [Postal Police] Security Force inaugurated vehicle patrols in areas with a high rate of collection box attacks and carrier assaults. The patrol program was coordinated closely with the local enforcement officials and resulted in a number of apprehensions and a general reduction to postal crimes in the patrol areas.”

Likewise, the 1974 Inspection Service Annual Report states:

“The Street Patrol Program has proved effective in high crime areas where letter carrier holdups, assaults, and check letter thefts have become a serious problem. The Security Force contributed to a reduction in the incidence of criminal attacks on the Postal Service, its customers and employees.”

Simply put, whenever and wherever Postal Police Officers have been deployed, an immediate and significant reduction in postal-related crime results.

Here are a few more historic examples:

In 1992, the Postal Inspection Service implemented “Operation Deterrence.” A 1993 Inspection Service semiannual report described its success as follows:

“Operation Deterrence maximizes the utilization of Postal Police Officers in combating post office, contract driver and carrier robberies, as well as large volume mail thefts through the use of roving patrols. PPOs are deployed to

patrol high-value mail theft areas during the hours of street delivery, visit post offices to see if the carriers leave to deliver the mail, and patrol stations and post offices during openings and closings to provide extra protection of employees and remittances. Operation Deterrence has proven to be a successful program as evidenced by the fact that robbery incidents in the New York City area decreased 50% in FY 1993 compared to FY 1992.”

In 1997, Washington, D.C. saw a sharp increase in attacks on letter carriers while on their routes. In response, the Postal Inspection Service instituted yet another postal police street patrol program. According to Postal Inspection Service records, by 1998—because of postal police patrolling activities—the incidence of postal-related street crime decreased by 67% in the D.C. area.

Training for PPOs

PPOs receive their basic training at the Inspection Service’s own training academy, which has received Federal Law Enforcement Training Accreditation (FLETA). This same police academy trains Postal Inspectors.

PPOs receive three months of rigorous police training. Postal police basic training combines the training that most federal police officers receive with specialized training relating to the protection of the postal infrastructure. Postal police basic training includes modules on Crime Prevention, Community Policing, Responding to Critical Incidents; Dangerous Mail Investigation Response; and of course, Firearm, Officer Survival, and Threat Management training.

PPO training does not end after the 12 weeks of basic training. PPOs also undergo 9-months of in-service field training. Employees are not considered full-

fledged Postal Police Officers until the 9-month probationary training period is complete.

PPOs also undergo in-service law-enforcement training throughout their careers. PPOs themselves serve as instructors for many of these in-service classes, which include police tactics, as well as updated training on postal-related issues.

PPO Duties and Responsibilities

Since 2006 and until the summer of 2020, the Postal Service used PPOs as a crime-prevention and response force on letter carrier routes and public streets.

The roles of PPOs and Postal Inspectors are akin to uniformed police officers and white-collar detectives in a municipal police force. Postal Inspectors are among the best criminal investigators working today, however, they show up after crimes have been committed and the scene secure.

The role of a Postal Police Officer, by contrast, is to prevent postal crime from happening so that costly follow-up investigations become unnecessary. In short, PPOs specialize in crime prevention, not after-the-fact criminal investigations. PPOs also work 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Thus, unlike Postal Inspectors, PPOs are always on duty, around the clock, every day of the year. While Postal Inspectors generally work from the relative safety of their offices in central postal facilities, PPOs work the streets—or at least we once did.

For example, in 2011, with letter carriers expressing increasing concern about their safety while delivering the mail, the Chicago District and the Postal Inspection Service rolled out what was called the “Carrier Protection Program.” This Program, in conjunction with the Chicago Police Department, deployed Postal

Police Officers to protect letter carriers and prevent mail theft in high-crime areas. The Postal Service itself touts the importance of using PPOs to protect the U.S. Mail and letter carriers out on their routes. The USPS website currently states:

“Arriving home safely is a letter carrier’s most important delivery. That’s why the Postal Inspection Service is responding with an extra layer of security to help carriers stay safe and avoid becoming victims of street crime. In the Chicago District, that means using Postal Police Officers on street patrols.”

<https://liteblue.usps.gov/news/link/2012/03mar/news27s1.htm>

The trend of deploying Postal Police Officers away from postal real property continued and, by 2017, nearly all Inspection Service Divisions realized the benefits of utilizing Postal Police Officers away from postal real property. In fact, protecting postal workers and the U.S. Mail away from postal property became a core function of the Postal Police Force.

For example, Postal Police Officers in Philadelphia were a “100% Mobile Force” according to the Inspection Service. Indeed, Philadelphia Postal Police were conducting “expanded patrols” which included traveling into New Jersey (as far north as Trenton), into Delaware, and east as far as Harrisburg.

Expenditures of Resources

The Postal Inspection Service invests heavily in training its Postal Police Force. Not only does the Agency provide PPOs with tactical police training, it also provides officers with specific postal-related training. This specialized training gives PPOs a deeper understanding of how, why, where, and when postal crimes

occur, and therefore, makes the Postal Police Force more effective in combatting postal-related crime.

At a significant monetary cost, the Inspection Service equipped Postal Police Officers with intelligent-led policing technology. This geospatial technology allowed officers to pinpoint the exact locations of letter carriers while they delivered mail. Using crime mapping, and in conjunction with local police departments, the Inspection Service was able to determine locations where letter carriers and the U.S. Mail were most vulnerable and assigned Postal Police Officers accordingly.

The Postal Service Benched its Postal Police Force in 2020

Despite the obvious success of postal police patrols, on August 25, 2020, Postmaster General Louis DeJoy and his Chief Postal Inspector, Gary Barksdale, stripped Postal Police Officer of their law enforcement authority and began gutting the Postal Police Force. This was done during a pay dispute and three months before a national election.

The 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA) allows the Postal Service to hire “Police Officers” and Congress specifically codified the jurisdictional authority of Postal Police Officers into the U.S. Code. Title 18 U.S.C. §3061 sets forth “the investigative powers” of postal service law-enforcement personnel. Subsection (c) of the law speaks directly to PPOs. Until August 25, 2020, the Postal Service had continuously, and correctly, interpreted the word “property” to mean all forms of postal property. The August 25, 2020, Inspection Service directive reinterpreted the law, upended long-standing practice and bypassed congressional intent.

For decades, Postal Police Officers served a vital role protecting mail outside of postal real estate, ensuring that blue collection boxes and postal vehicles were not targets of theft and that letter carriers received proper protection on their routes. Despite this, the Postal Service made a policy decision and confined these highly-trained officers to postal real estate. Since August 25, 2020, the Postal Service has adopted a cramped interpretation of “property” simply to eliminate postal police officer positions.

The Inspection Service then went a step further by actually prohibiting PPOs from responding to any postal-related crime away from postal facilities even if those crimes were being committed in the officer’s presence. In other words, if a PPO were to witness an on-duty postal employee being violently attacked while off postal property—the officer is prohibited from stopping the attack. Incredibly, this prohibition remains in effect today.

The Postal Service is Defunding its Police Force

Once 2,700 officers strong, postal police ranks have been decimated to approximately 350 rank-and-file officers. In fact, our force has been reduced by 20% since 2020.

After more than two years of not hiring even one PPO, the Inspection Service is only now holding a Postal Police Officer Basic Training Class (PPOBT). But despite a potential class size of 24 officers, the Agency only placed 17 applicants into training, of which only 15 student-officers currently remain. To make matters worse, there is only *one* PPO basic training class scheduled for 2023. Given the

current attrition rate, in all likelihood there will be fewer than 300 rank-and-file PPOs by the Year 2024.

During his recent State of the Union address, President Biden said:

We should all agree: The answer is not to defund the police. The answer is to fund the police with the resources and training they need to protect our communities.

Apparently, the Postal Service thinks the President is wrong. Indeed, the Postal Service is actively defunding its uniformed police force.

Here are the facts:

- After 50 years—the Inspection Service revoked the policing power of Postal Police Officers while they are away from postal real property.
- After 50 years, all proactive postal police mail theft prevention and letter carrier protection patrols have been eliminated.
- 19 of 21 postal police divisions are severely below their authorized complement.
- Nationwide, bargaining-unit Postal Police Officers are at less than 62% of full complement.
- Nationwide, non-bargaining Postal Police Sergeants, Lieutenants, and Captains are at less than 70% of full complement.
- The Inspection Service has eliminated entire postal police tours in Detroit, Memphis, Oakland, San Francisco, St. Louis, Washington DC and even here in Philadelphia. In other words, Postal Police operations no longer support 24-hour policing coverage.

- Since 2020 the PPO attrition rate has far exceeded the hiring rate *and there is absolutely no plan to reverse the trend.*
- In March of 2021, the Postal Service paid for a private contractor—Booz Allen Hamilton—to rubber-stamp the absurd recommendation to eliminate nearly ALL postal police divisions and positions.
- In June of 2021, the Postal Service notified the PPOA that it was starting an internal “assessment” of postal police staffing levels “to determine whether employees are in excess to the needs of postal police facilities nationwide.” The Postal Service warned that “the Union will be given at least a 90-day notice prior to the closing of any [postal police] facility or worksite.”

It is readily apparent that the Postal Service—with the full support of the Inspection Service—is well on its way to achieve its goal of systematically defunding and eliminating postal police operations in most Inspection Service Divisions.

Postal Crime has Spiraled out of Control

Mail theft and attacks on postal workers are now the norm, rather than the exception. It is no coincidence that the tidal wave of postal crime is occurring at the precise time when the Inspection Service decimated the Postal Police Force and stripped officers of their policing power.

It is abundantly clear that the safety of postal customers, postal employees, and the U.S. Mail is no longer guaranteed. It is now "open season" and postal workers are fair game.

Unfortunately, the actions taken by the Inspection Service may have exacerbated the mail theft problem. Instead of taking what is—by far—the most common-sense approach to fight mail theft, namely, deploying Postal Police Officers to strategic hotspots to combat postal-related crime — the Inspection Service may have made the problem worse by “hardening” blue collection boxes. Now, instead of simply fishing letters out of blue collection boxes, criminals have resorted to attacking and robbing letter carriers at gunpoint.

There are hundreds of news reports from across the country documenting how bad the postal crime wave has really become. Most troubling are the news reports of letter carriers being robbed repeatedly in the same neighborhood, or the exact same blue collection boxes being hit over and over again.

To make a bad situation worse, these crimes are occurring in areas where PPOs once patrolled. It is no exaggeration to say that Postal Police Officers — those of us who actually remain — are sitting on the sidelines watching this debacle unfold.

In Philadelphia mail theft has gotten so bad that [NBC10](#) reported the Haverford Township Police Chief as having said: “**Honestly, I don’t trust the mail at all anymore.**”

On August 31, 2022, another local police chief in the Philadelphia area told NBC10, that the mail theft problem was “**insane.**”

NBC10 also obtained Inspection Service data which disclosed that in the Philadelphia area alone, “98 arrow keys were stolen from January 2019 to February 2022. Of the 98, ONLY three [3] arrow keys have been recovered.”

The Costs of the Postal Crime Wave

Mail theft has a cost to both the postal brand and the cost of conducting after-the-fact criminal investigations:

First, postal-related crime obviously delays the mail. There are many reports in the media where mail delivery has been suspended to entire neighborhoods because of attacks on letter carriers.

Indeed, at a U.S. House field hearing in October of 2021, Eddie Morgan, Chicago's Postmaster, identified "street crime" as a significant reason for delayed mail. Postmaster Morgan warned, "Street crime, including frequent assaults, robberies, and two carriers being shot, has raised understandable fear, leading to deficiencies in recruiting and retaining workforce" and "we continue to struggle with commitments from our new hires and even some career employees who refuse to deliver in certain zones within the City of Chicago due to violent crime."

Second, the current structure of the Inspection Service has almost four times the number of Postal Inspectors as Postal Police Officers. As such, it is painfully obvious that the Postal Inspection Service would rather conduct costly after-the-fact investigations than prevent crime from happening in the first place.

This is a broken model of law enforcement. Today, most law-enforcement agencies have shifted from away from investing in costly investigations, prosecutions and incarcerations, and instead focus on crime-prevention strategies such as hotspot policing and data-driven policing. Here the PPOA is reminded of what Harvard researchers recently suggested:

Perhaps the United States, like the rest of the developed world, ought to emphasize policing and penal certainty rather than incarceration and penal severity. Perhaps the United States ought to shift resources from incarceration to policing until the balance between the two looks more like the balance in the rest of the developed world. The implications of such a move—which we call the First World Balance—would be dramatic. The United States today has almost three times as many prisoners as police officers. If it raised no revenue but simply used the money saved by cutting prison populations to hire police officers until the ratio was the same as the ratio in the developed world (about 3.4 times as many police officers as prisoners), the new United States would have about 370,000 prisoners and 1.1 million police officers.”

(Christopher Lewis, Adaner Usmani; THE INJUSTICE OF UNDER-POLICING IN AMERICA. *American Journal of Law and Equality* 2022; 2 85–106. doi: https://doi.org/10.1162/ajle_a_00030)

Clearly, the Postal Inspection Service has this all backwards. It is less costly, both financially and socially, to prevent crime than investigate crime. To that end, for every Postal Inspector hired, the Postal Service could have hired two (2) PPOs at drastically less cost.

Perhaps more worrying is the fact that the Inspection Service’s costly mail-theft investigations do not yield many arrests. The Inspection Service’s 2021 Annual Report claims Postal Inspectors “initiated 1,079 mail theft cases resulting in 1,511 arrests and 1,263 convictions.” These numbers may seem impressive at first blush, but they are not. According to the same report, there are now approximately 1,300 Postal Inspectors, meaning each Postal Inspector—on average—has a total of 1.2 mail theft arrests per year. And that number is highly exaggerated, because the Postal Inspection Service claims “arrests” even when those arrests were actually

effected by local municipal police officers. *See* Postal Service’s Brief in *Nigg vs. Postal Service*.

Indeed, the USPS Office of Inspector General recently conducted a “Review of Postal Inspection Service Criminal and Administrative Processes.” Among other findings, the OIG determined that “60% of postal inspector arrests were actually made by other law enforcement officers.” (Report Number HR-AR-19-002).

Specifically, the Inspector General found that in one Inspection Service Division:

“In the 42 cases reviewed with arrests, postal inspectors claimed 96 arrests, 38 of which (40 percent) were made by postal inspectors and 58 of which (60 percent) were made by other law enforcement personnel. Of the 38 postal inspector arrests: Thirty-one (82 percent) did not include any investigative notes detailing the circumstances surrounding the arrest, or a list of evidence seized. Of the 58 arrests made by other law enforcement personnel: Forty-eight (83 percent) did not include any investigative notes detailing the circumstances surrounding the arrest, or a list of evidence seized.”

It would appear that postal inspector operations alone are insufficient to combat the postal crime wave.

The Postal Inspection Service is ignoring the principles of the 2006 PAEA.

On December 20, 2006, the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act was signed into law. PAEA not only allowed the Postal Service to hire “police officers,” it also imposed a fundamental shift in the Postal Service’s business plan. Congress

wanted the Postal Service to change from a break-even model, in which costs were passed down to customers, to a profit-or-loss model that requires the Postal Service to successfully manage its costs.

This cost-control mandate should equally apply to the Inspection Service. The Inspection Service, however, is flouting this congressional mandate by eliminating or drastically reducing postal police operations, in favor of other higher cost interests.

Obviously, the Postal Inspection Service's core function is the protection of the Postal Service, its employees, its customers and the U.S. Mail. And yet armed robberies of letter carriers, mail theft, identity theft and check fraud are increasing at alarming rates.

The Postal Inspection Service's response to the mail theft epidemic was to eliminate the jurisdictional authority of its postal police officers and otherwise gut its uniformed police force. Unfortunately, the Postal Inspection Service has a long history of misaligned priorities.

For example, in 2009, the Postal Service itself commissioned a private consulting firm to conduct an independent mission review of the Postal Inspection Service. The independent consulting firm identified several functions that did not require a Postal Inspector to perform. That same independent mission review also determined that nearly 40 percent of postal inspector investigations do not clearly align with supporting the needs of the Postal Service. In fact, the independent consultant went so far as to recommend that the Postal Service amend the Inspection Service mission statement. The suggested language read:

"The mission of the United States Postal Inspection Service is to support the U.S. Postal Service by protecting its people and assets; securing the nation's mail system and ensuring public trust in the mail."

In 2011, the findings of the independent consulting firm were thoroughly endorsed by the USPS Inspector General. The Inspector General reiterated that the Inspection Service must "clearly align priorities, including identifying programs that have a substantial connection to the mail." Of course, the implication is that many Inspection Service programs do not align with the mail or the needs of the Postal Service.

The Inspector General found:

"The Postal Inspection Service conducts investigations that are not inherently related to Postal Service operations or mission. We found that more than 34 percent of investigative activities do not directly support protection of Postal Service assets, Postal Service employees, or the mail system. Further, by pursuing work outside of these core areas, the Postal Inspection Service has moved away from its primary responsibility to protect the Postal Service, secure the nation's mail system and ensure public trust in the mail. These non-postal investigative activities involve areas where other agencies have primary jurisdiction; the casework benefits all Americans, not solely postal ratepayers; or the work does not align with the mission of the Postal Service. Eliminating these activities could realize annual cost savings of \$77 million or \$766 million over the next 10 years."

The Inspector General continued:

“The U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General (OIG) has informally communicated this concern to the Postal Service and the Postal Inspection Service in the past. However, the Postal Inspection Service has continued to conduct these investigations. One alternative the postmaster general should consider is combining all investigative activities of the Postal Inspection Service and OIG into one organization that only conducts investigations that are inherently related to Postal Service mission and operations. [...] Further, merging some overlapping program areas, such as internal and external mail theft, could lead to more effective and cost efficient investigations. Finally, if consolidated, the combined organization would conduct investigations that are inherently related to Postal Service operations and missions. Thus, the consolidation could realize an additional annual cost savings of \$15 million or \$146 million over the next 10 years.”

Given the Inspector General’s findings, one would think that the Inspection Service would set its priorities straight. Unfortunately, not much has changed. In a "sleight of hand move," the Inspection Service changed its mission statement without actually changing how it operates.

In fact, not only is the Inspection Service in the process of dismantling its Postal Police Force, it has doubled down on investigations that have nothing to do with the needs of the Postal Service. For instance, there is the recent controversy over the Agency’s so-called “Internet Covert Operations Program” otherwise known as iCOP. The Inspector General recently launched an investigation into iCOP — at the request of Congress.

In March of 2022 — the Inspector General found that iCOP “exceeded the Postal Inspection Service’s law enforcement authority” and “the keywords used for iCOP...did not include any terms with a postal nexus.”

The Inspector General made a number of recommendations, most of which the Inspection Service discounted.

Somehow, according to the Inspection Service, Title 18, §3061 empowers Postal Inspectors to monitor and collect Americans’ social media posts, while that same statute does not allow Postal Police Officers to protect the U.S. Mail and postal workers away from postal real property.

Clearly, the Postal Inspection Service has lost its way. In report after report, the Inspector General finds that the Inspection Service is wasting time and money and yet the Postal Service doesn’t seem to care enough to set the Inspection Service straight.

As is well known, 21st-century policing strategies such as hotspot policing, intelligence-led policing, and other data-driven law enforcement techniques are proven to be highly effective in reducing crime. For obvious reasons, including financial, these proactive policing strategies are better performed by uniformed officers rather than criminal investigators.

Remarkably, however, the Inspection Service now has almost 4 times more plain-clothed investigators than rank-and-file uniformed officers. At last count, there were approximately 1300 Postal Inspectors and 350 rank-and-file Postal Police Officers. There can be no question that the Inspection Service has prioritized

the investigation of crime over the prevention of crime. Only in the topsy-turvy world of the Postal Inspection Service could this make sense.

Even so, the Inspection Service seems to fly under the Postmaster General's radar. Having a recognized and statutorily authorized uniformed police force within its organization provides the Postal Service with a unique asset possessed by no other carrier.

One would think that the Postal Service would exploit this advantage. Given the absolute explosion in mail theft, it would make eminent sense for the Inspection Service to maximize its uniformed Postal Police Force. But it refuses to do so. Why?

These actions have yielded strange outcomes. PPOs are 80% people of color. Postal Inspectors are overwhelmingly white. While the Inspection Service has decimated the ranks of PPOs, it has been quick to replenish the ranks of the Postal Inspectors. And in the absence of Postal Police Officers, Postal Inspection Service law enforcement functions can only be performed by the much-higher-paid Postal Inspectors.

In the Year 2022, the Postal Service is really replacing lower-paid black and brown employees with higher-paid white employees.

To be clear, the PPOA is not claiming that Postal Inspectors and Postal Police Officers are interchangeable. They are not. Postal Inspectors are plain-clothed criminal investigators and PPOs are uniformed federal police officers. However, if the Agency decides to fill in the gap left by eliminated PPO positions, the Inspection Service must divert Postal Inspectors away from their criminal investigations and reassign them to the protective and patrol functions traditionally performed by

PPOs. Examples include Mail Theft Prevention Patrols, Carrier Protection Patrols, Drug Parcel Interdiction, Robbery Prevention Patrols, Mail Transportation Equipment Recovery, and responding to postal-related street crimes such as armed robberies of letter carriers and mail theft.

These once routine postal police protective functions and first responder duties have either been drastically reduced or completely eliminated. Needless to say, having highly-paid Postal Inspectors devoting resources to functions traditionally performed by PPOs is fiscally irresponsible and results in severe under-policing.

Many of the crimes targeting our nation's Letter Carriers and the U.S. Mail could be prevented by simply having uniformed Postal Police Officers patrolling carrier routes in strategic, high-crime locations. Perhaps the Inspection Service could even put its so-called "iCOP" to good use by tracking and collecting mail theft data—rather than Facebook posts—and then strategically deploying PPOs to troubled hotspots to prevent postal-related street crime.

This is not a novel idea. Local Postal Inspection Service managers have continuously expressed the need to hire more Postal Police Officers and then utilize those officers to protect postal employees and the U.S. Mail away from postal facilities. In other words, the people on the ground, the people who actually manage local Inspection Service operations, believe that deploying PPOs away from postal facilities can—and will—make a difference.

In sworn testimony during a June 2022 national postal arbitration hearing, the Inspection Service's Chief Counsel admitted that Inspection Service

leadership—at the local level—want to return to using PPOs off property to stem the rising tide of postal-related street crime. But high-ranking Postal Service officials sitting in Washington D.C. will not allow it.

The Inspection Service itself — albeit under different national leadership — previously advertised postal police carrier protection patrols and other mail theft prevention activities as being critical to the fulfillment of the Postal Inspection Service’s mission. Unfortunately, the decision to subvert postal police authority on August 25, 2020, is the hallmark of the Agency’s return to misaligned priorities.

The U.S. Postal Service is widely considered the “crown jewel” of our federal government. It serves every household and business across this great nation. More than ever Americans are relying on the Postal Service to stay safe while accessing critical supplies, and to cast their election ballots, by mail.

The Postal Service, perhaps America’s most beloved federal institution, is in peril. Postal workers are being attacked and mail is being stolen at unprecedented levels. Make no mistake; the Postal Inspection Service is doing very little about it. In fact, the Inspection Service has begun the process of defunding its uniformed Postal Police Force during an unparalleled postal crime wave. Americans deserve to have their mail protected and postal employees deserve to feel safe while they’re at work. The Postal Service must effectively utilize all of its resources to curb the plague of mail theft and stop the attacks on postal workers. It is obvious to everyone—except the Postal Service—that Postal Police Officers are the most cost-effective resource to accomplish this critical goal.

In 1772, Pennsylvania's own Benjamin Franklin, in effect, created the Inspection Service, making it America's first and oldest law enforcement agency. It's time that the Inspection Service realign its priorities and enter into the 21st Century of policing and law enforcement.

Americans cannot continue to be the victims of the unbridled scourge of mail theft, identity theft, and check fraud that is now plaguing practically every area of the country—some worse than others. We implore Congress to demand that the Postal Inspection Service utilize its Postal Police Officers in this fight.