

## **EPN Comments on USPS' Proposal "Ballot Mail for Federal Elections"**

Docket No. USPS-2026-1289-0001

July 2, 2026

The [Environmental Protection Network](https://www.environmentalprotectionnetwork.org) (EPN) harnesses the expertise of more than 750 former Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) career staff and confirmation-level appointees from Democratic and Republican administrations to provide the unique perspective of former regulators and scientists with decades of historical knowledge and subject matter expertise.

EPN respectfully submits this comment in opposition to the U.S. Postal Service's (USPS) proposed rule entitled "Ballot Mail for Federal Elections."

We are not experts on the USPS nor on the handling of mail-in ballots, but we do know the importance of free and fair voting, which is a cornerstone of American democracy and also fundamental to America's environmental progress. The very existence of the U.S. EPA, which was created just months after tens of millions of Americans participated in the first Earth Day in 1970, is a testament to the virtue of a government that serves "We The People."

As former EPA employees, we have witnessed firsthand how the American public shapes EPA for the better through their elected officials.

As former regulators, we also understand the importance of accountable rule-making. Successful EPA administrators across Republican and Democratic presidents have recognized that EPA best serves the public by following three rules: follow the law, follow the science, and be transparent. This has served the agency well, and more than 90% of Americans today support EPA's core mission.<sup>1</sup>

USPS' proposed rule fails these tests.

On June 24, U.S. Postmaster General David Steiner told Congress that if this rule is promulgated, USPS would refuse to deliver mail-in ballots in any state that has not shared its lists of absentee voters with the federal government.<sup>2</sup>

If American citizens follow their state's instructions and lawfully cast their ballot by mail, but USPS refuses to deliver those ballots, then those citizens will be disenfranchised. By degrading the democratic foundations of our electoral system, the proposed rule will weaken trust in our government and inhibit representative, just and effective governance.

Anthony P. Ashton, NAACP's Senior Associate General Counsel, states that "the right to vote should never be subject to arbitrary barriers or last-minute rule changes that create confusion and suppress participation."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.environmentalprotectionnetwork.org/20260603\\_may-2026-poll\\_release/](https://www.environmentalprotectionnetwork.org/20260603_may-2026-poll_release/)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s2bJ5qMeuUU>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.citizen.org/news/naacp-moves-to-halt-usps-mail-in-ballot-proposed-rule/>

We agree.

The mission of USPS is to serve the American people, bind our nation together, and provide trusted, safe and secure communications.

If USPS pursues a partisan political agenda under the guise of good-government, it will lose the trust of the people it serves.

If USPS acts in a manner to deter or suppress votes, then it will diminish not only itself, but also our democracy.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.