

**STATEMENT OF**  
**JAMES SALMON**  
**ARIZONA VICE PRESIDENT AND STATE LEGISLATIVE CHAIR**  
**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POSTAL SUPERVISORS**  
**SUBCOMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATION AND BORDER**  
**SECURITY**

**UNITED STATES SENATE**

**JULY 15, 2022**

Chairwoman Sinema and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am James Salmon. I serve as the Vice President and Legislative Chair of the Arizona State Branch of the National Association of Postal Supervisors (NAPS). Thank you for conducting this hearing today and for inviting NAPS to appear before the subcommittee on behalf of the approximately 48,000 postal supervisors, managers and postmasters employed by the U.S. Postal Service nationwide.

For over a century, NAPS has strived to enhance the operations and finances of the Postal Service, and improve the compensation and working conditions of supervisory and managerial level postal employees. NAPS members manage and supervise mail processing and delivery operations. We also represent men and women engaged in every functional unit in the Postal Service, including customers service,

marketing, human resources, training, corporate relations, law enforcement, and health and safety,

Clearly, safeguarding the health and safety of postal employees is one of the primary goals of postal managers, supervisors and postmasters. Promoting a healthy and safe work environment ensures the well-being of the Postal Service workforce; and also sustains postal reliability and effectiveness. Failure to safeguard the work environment undermines worker health, worker availability, and mail operations.

A key facet of postal delivery operations are our letter carriers. These dedicated employees deliver mail, 6-days a week, to over 163 million delivery points in our nation. I might add that, at times, postal managers, including postmasters, temporarily cover the postal routes of carriers for whom we cannot get last-minute coverage.

As the widely-referenced postal motto states: “Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers for the swift completion of their appointed rounds.”

For Arizona postal employees, “nor heat” resonates sharply. Once carriers depart their climate-controlled postal facility during the summer, late spring and early fall months, they are unavoidably exposed to the

temperature extremes that characterize the American southwest. However, for most of us, the triple or high-double-digit temperatures are fleeting and uncomfortable aggravations due to the accessibility of air-conditioned vehicles. But, for many letter carriers, the temperature poses a serious health and safety threat due to the lack of vehicular air-conditioning. Although most Americans escape the extreme heat by virtue of climate-controlled personal vehicles, letter carriers do not have the “luxury” of climate-controlled postal vehicles. In fact, the interior temperature of postal vehicles exceeds by more than 20 degrees the outdoor ambient temperature. Additionally, to complete their “appointed rounds,” letter carriers must exit their postal vehicles, at designated regular intervals, to deliver mail to residential mail boxes, mail slots, or businesses. Some of these vehicles average 600 stops per day.

While the Postal Service cannot control the climate, it can mitigate the impact upon its employees. This mitigation is important because heat-related illness among postal employees impacts worker availability and mail operations.

For this reason, NAPS supports the Postal Service’s prompt deployment for a new delivery fleet, a fleet which includes climate-controlled vehicles. The Postal Service presently uses 217,000 delivery vehicles. The overwhelming majority of these vehicles are way beyond their 24-

year projected life expectancy and do not have air conditioning. Replacement parts are almost non-existent and repairs are expensive and short-lived. Consequently, earlier this year, the Postal Service announced a 10-year contract to manufacture 165,000 new generation postal delivery vehicles. The first order of 50,000 vehicles was placed in March and the agency is expected to accept its initial delivery in 2023. So, the Postal Service's intent to place in service new delivery vehicles, with climate control is widely anticipated and appreciated by its employees.

We urge the agency to prioritize the deployment of the new vehicles to those regions of the country where air-conditioning is essential, including Arizona.

In the meantime, Madame Chair, we look forward to continuing to work with you and the Congress in making the Postal Service stronger and safer than ever.

I will be happy to answer any questions you and members of the Subcommittee may have.