Dear USPS Board of Governors:

We, the undersigned, write to express our grave concern regarding the Board’s decision to eliminate public comments during the 2024 open sessions.

The United States Postal Service is a remarkable organization. The Postal Service arguably has the greatest amount of firsthand contact with the American public of any federal agency. Indeed, all people living in the United States, at one point or another, sends or receives mail. Furthermore, the Postal Service is one of the county’s largest civilian federal workforces, employing approximately 635,000 workers.[[1]](#footnote-1) In a March 2023 poll, the Pew Research Center found that Americans view the Postal Service very favorably (a 77% approval rating, only second to the National Parks Service).[[2]](#footnote-2)

Given the above, it is unsurprising that the American public regularly participates in the Board’s quarterly open session meetings. The ability of the public to participate both remotely and in-person is essential to insuring transparency and accountability of the Postal Service. The public comment period at the end of each open session meeting ensures that the Postal Service receives vital information about how it is impacting the American public as a service provider and employer.

This is why it we were shocked when the Board announced that it would be summarily suspending all public comment during open session meetings until November 2024. In other words, the public would be prohibited from engaging with the Board for almost a year. The Board did not proffer any meaningful explanation for this arbitrary action. Perhaps it was to avoid uncomfortable complaints about delayed mail service or severe understaffing. Or perhaps, it was to stifle criticisms of the 10-year plan, which implements aggressive privatization measures and promises to negatively impact rural communities and postal workers. Regardless of the reasoning behind it, one thing is certain: prohibiting the public from engaging with the Board harms everyone.

The Postal Board’s restrictions on public participation during its open sessions is unacceptable and counterproductive. Therefore, we demand that the Board immediately reinstate public comment periods, and accept both in-person and virtual comments, at all open sessions going forward.

Sincerely,

1. <https://www.uspsoig.gov/about-us#:~:text=With%20more%20than%20%2478%20billion,country's%20largest%20civilian%20federal%20workforces>. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2023/03/30/americans-feel-favorably-about-many-federal-agencies-especially-the-park-service-postal-service-and-nasa/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)