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Contact: Oversight and Government Reform Press Office, (202) 225-5051

Chairman Towns Calls on USPS Inspector General to Investigate Delivery Disruption of New York State Pension Checks

WASHINGTON - Chairman Edolphus "Ed" Towns today requested an investigation into an incident involving significant delays in the delivery of pension checks in New York. The Chairman is calling on David Williams, the United States Postal Service Inspector General, to investigate the thousands of pension checks that were placed in the mail on December 30, 2009 and should have been delivered on December 31, 2009 or January 2, 2010.

"The delivery delays have caused hardships for seniors who depend on their pension check to help make ends meet," said Chairman Towns. "I intend to follow this investigation and I will get to the bottom of this incident."

Chairman Towns asked the IG to provide a report to the Committee on their investigation by January 27, 2010.

Text of the letter is below.

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January 13, 2010
Mr. David Williams
Inspector General
U.S. Postal Service
1735 North Lynn Street
Washington, DC 22209-2020

Dear Mr. Williams,

I am writing to ask that you investigate an incident involving significant delays in the delivery of pension checks in New York. The Office of the State Comptroller of New York, by all accounts, properly entered mail into the postal system on December 30, 2009. This mail contained 60,000 pension checks which I understand should have been delivered on December 31, 2009 or January 1, 2010. Instead, thousands of the checks were misplaced and sent to other states, and the Postal Service only started delivering the misplaced checks to New York residents on January 11, 2010. The Postal Service is still trying to determine the location of some of the checks.

The delay has caused distress and hardship to thousands of senior citizens in New York and other states. The Comptroller has had to reissue thousands of checks and has been flooded with calls from retirees upset about the delay in receiving their anticipated pension payments.

I request that you investigate this incident and report to the Committee on:

1. The extent of the delays in delivery of the pension checks, including the number of checks that were delayed and the length of the delays.
2. The cause or causes of these delays.
3. Steps that the Postal Service is taking to resolve any outstanding problems with delivery of the affected checks.
4. Corrective measures that the Postal Service has implemented or will implement to ensure that such an incident does not occur again.
5. Recommendations for further actions to prevent such incidents in the future.

I request that you provide a report to the Committee on these issues by January 27, 2010.

Sincerely,

Edolphus Towns
Chairman