



UNITED STATES POSTAL INSPECTION SERVICE

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OFFICE OF COUNSEL

I am Steven Sultan, United States Postal Inspector, and Deputy Chief Counsel for the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. The Postal Inspection Service is the federal law enforcement and security arm of the United States Postal Service. Our agency works diligently to enforce criminal laws to protect the U.S. Postal Service employees, customers, and our nation's mailstream.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

Unfortunately, over a period of a few years, mail theft and robberies of USPS letter carriers rose dramatically. Furthermore, while in the past this criminal activity was predominantly committed by lone actors and small informal groups, it has become common for large, organized criminal groups to be involved in these crimes.

Many of the robberies of carriers are now for their postal keys, sometimes also called arrow keys.

These keys permit access to collection boxes, outdoor parcel lockers, cluster box units, and apartment panels in a given geographic area. Once in possession of these keys, these criminals are able to steal U.S. Mail from these receptacles. This stolen mail is then used to commit financial crimes, with often devastating financial impacts to victims, to include the elderly and other vulnerable populations

The Postal Service and the Postal Inspection Service has taken significant efforts to address this increase in postal crime. We are upgrading collection boxes with high security features, including electronic locking components. We are raising awareness through public education messaging and training our employees and law enforcement partners, and we have stepped up our enforcement of the laws that protect our employees and the nation's mail, collaborating with prosecutors and other law enforcement agencies at the federal, state, and local levels.

This legislation would enhance this enforcement. It would supplement and not replace or usurp federal laws and would further the collaboration that is already occurring.

While federal charges may be appropriate in some cases or for some members of a criminal enterprise, state charges may be most appropriate for others. Furthermore, as there no juvenile justice system federally, this bill would provide a tool to address instances where juveniles participate in these crimes.

Postal inspectors are proud to work diligently alongside local Maryland law enforcement and prosecutors to protect Maryland Postal Service employees and keep Maryland postal customer's mail safe.

I recognize that your constituents depend on the Postal Service for safe and reliable transmittal of mail and this bill would enhance our ability to carry out this mission. Thank you.

