



November 17, 2022

Dear Chairman Scott, Ranking Member Foxx, and members of the House Education and Labor Committee:

On behalf of the 650,000 postal employees and retirees represented by the American Postal Workers Union, the National Association of Letter Carriers, the National Postal Mail Handlers Union, and the National Rural Letter Carriers Association, we write urging you to extend the OWCP COVID-19 presumption language which is set to expire January 27, 2023.

In March 2021, Congress passed the American Rescue Plan Act, which included critical language that streamlined federal and postal workers' compensation claims. Prior to the passage of this bill, workers were required to prove they not only contracted the illness while on the clock, but that they also could not have contracted it through their daily lives, such as by visiting a gas station on their way to work, or by attending a religious service. The burden of proof was immense and resulted in nearly half of all claims being denied. Fortunately, Congress took action to pass OWCP COVID-19 presumption which ensured that workers received the resources needed in order to get themselves and their families through their illnesses.

As a result of Congress' action, OWCP COVID-19 claim denial rates dropped to under 3% for employees throughout the Postal Service. Unfortunately, COVID-19 continues to plague USPS facilities, and in June, July, and August of 2022, there were 7,883 claims filed. With COVID-19 remaining a fact of life, and Americans continuing to contract the virus, the COVID-19 presumption remains as vital as it was when it was first signed into law.

The expiration of the presumption language is deeply concerning for our members who are limited by the nature of their work to effectively socially distance themselves, resulting in greater exposure to COVID-19. We urge you to extend this lifeline and ensure that postal workers can attain the benefits they need to continue serving the American public.

Sincerely,

Fredric V. Rolando
President
National Association of Letter Carriers

Mark Dimondstein
President
American Postal Workers Union

Paul V. Hogrogian
President
National Postal Mail Handlers Union

Ronnie W. Stutts
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