

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 13, 2025

The Honorable David Steiner
Postmaster General
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington, D.C., 20260

Dear Postmaster General Steiner:

This letter is being sent following the death of Nicholas John Acker, a constituent from Trenton and longtime Dearborn resident, at the USPS Detroit Network Distribution Center (NDC) in Allen Park, Michigan. As the representatives for him and his family, his death is alarming and has raised many questions. Both of us care deeply about the staff of the NDC in Allen Park, many of whom are our constituents. We have toured the facility together on several occasions, and we have discussed and expressed our concerns regarding the facility over the years.

Reports indicate on Saturday, November 8, 2025, Nicholas was found in a mail handling machine and had been dead for 6-8 hours before he was found. We have been told he checked into work at 11am and his body wasn't found until 12:30pm the following day. The NDC has not said when Nicholas was last seen.

Nicholas served nine years in the Air Force and had gotten engaged in the past two weeks. He was a maintenance mechanic at the NDC and had mentioned concerns about the way the facility was run to his fiancée¹. His union management had also raised concerns about safety measures and procedures at the facility, and more than 90 days ago the union filed an article 14 grievance stating that management was putting pressure on staff to look for letters while the handling machine was operating. When Nicholas didn't return home from work on Saturday, his fiancée went to the facility where she waited outside the gates for three hours, as she watched emergency responders arrive, before she was notified of Nicholas's death.

We are requesting answers to questions that have arisen from this unnecessary tragedy. We worry what it means for the workers that officials were not called to the scene until hours after Nicholas died. Further, we are concerned how long Nicholas was in the machine before he was found and whether the machine was operating or turned off.

Given the USPS's responsibility for worker safety in their facilities, we ask that you please respond to the following questions within two weeks:

1. When was management made aware of Nicholas's disappearance, and what actions were taken to locate him? At what time did these actions occur?
2. Did the clock system flag Nicholas for missing his basic clock rings (check in/out and lunch in/out), and if so, when did it flag him?

¹ Erickson, E. (2025, November 12). "Allen Park postal worker found dead inside machine, fiancée seeks answers. Here's everything we know." *WDIV Local 4*. Retrieved 12 Nov. 2025. Retrieved from: www.clickondetroit.com/news/local/2025/11/12/allen-park-postal-worker-found-dead-inside-machine-fiancee-seeks-answers-heres-everything-we-know/.

3. When did management learn of Nicholas's death, and when was this reported to emergency services?
4. Was the handling machine powered on or off at the time of Nicholas's death?
5. Why did it take so long to notice Nicholas's disappearance?
6. How often are workers accounted for during their shifts? After Nicholas checked in at 11am, did he check in or out again?
7. Is there video surveillance or monitoring where Nicholas was working?
8. Did Nicholas have a work sheet, route sheet, or work order for dumper A-17? What time did Nicholas go up to dumper A-17?
9. When was dumper A-17 last serviced, and did it have a history of breaking down?
10. What are the safety protocols for going up on dumper A-17 and when employees are working on dumper A-17, are they alone or partnered up? If they do not have a partner, why do they not have a partner?
11. Have there been any prior accidents with this type of mail handling machine at the NDC or at any other USPS facilities?
12. Are maintenance mechanics trained on how to withdraw fallen mail or packages from machines and what are the safety protocols for withdrawing the fallen mail or packages?
13. Is there a certain time during a shift that maintenance mechanics are supposed to withdraw fallen mail or packages?
14. Is there a briefing where tour 1 and tour 2 maintenance mechanics overlap and give updates on the status of maintenance work completed during the prior shift?
15. Does the NDC keep training records, and if so, when was Nicholas trained on the safety procedures for dumper A-17 and for withdrawing fallen mail and packages from machines?
16. Has management advised workers at the NDC to extract fallen mail and packages while the handling machines are operating?
17. Do the conveyor and dumping machines at the NDC have sensors to halt the system when something, or someone, is impeding the moving parts of the machine? Does the conveyer system have emergency stops? If not, why not?
18. Do the maintenance mechanics have a check-in system with their management when they are working in dangerous spots, such as dumper A-17?
19. Where does the NDC keep their Postal Service Form 1767? It is our understanding that this form is where employees can express their safety concerns and receive a response to their concerns from postal management on the same day. However, we have been informed that when the maintenance mechanics raised concerns using PS1767s, the forms were relocated. Had anyone at the NDC filled out a PS1767 with concerns about dumper A-17, and if so, what was done to address their concerns?

Ensuring worker safety remains our top priority. Thank you, and we look forward to your full and prompt response.

Sincerely,



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress