

Kaine, Durbin, Collins Introduce Bipartisan Bill To Address Uptick In Attacks On Postal Service Mail Carriers

Washington, D.C. – Today, U.S. Senator Tim Kaine joined U.S. Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Susan Collins (R-ME) in introducing bipartisan legislation to address the steep increase in robberies against postal workers, who are often targeted for their arrow keys. These keys can command thousands of dollars on the clandestine market because they allow access to cluster mailboxes and their contents, including Social Security checks, prescriptions, and other valuable items. The Postal Police Reform Act would ensure that Postal Police Officers may be assigned to duty outside of U.S. Postal Service (USPS) real property to protect letter carriers on their routes.

“Mail carriers and Postal Service employees play a critical role in ensuring millions of Americans receive their mail,” said Kaine. “Amid a rise in mail theft in recent years, this bipartisan bill will help protect mail and mail carriers and will ensure Americans who depend on the Postal Service get their bills, prescription medications, and more.”

The Postal Inspection Service reports that armed robberies of letter carriers increased sharply between 2018 and 2021, rising from 36 incidents to 154 incidents. Communities across Virginia, including Henrico County, Newport News, and Richmond, have seen robberies of USPS drivers, mail carriers, and post boxes in recent months.

In 2020, under the leadership of Postmaster General Louis DeJoy, the USPS issued a directive that restricted Postal Police Officers to physical USPS properties. This directive has prevented Postal Police Officers from protecting the postal service and the integrity of the postal system outside physical postal properties. Prior to this order, Postal Police Officers were regularly granted authority to carry out their duties both on and off USPS property through annual appropriations language. The Postal Police Reform Act would counteract Postmaster General DeJoy’s 2020 directive and again allow Postal Police Officers to operate outside of Postal Service real property.

Kaine has long worked to improve USPS in Virginia. In 2022, he helped pass the bipartisan Postal Service Reform Act to strengthen transparency and accountability for USPS performance, eliminate unnecessary financial burdens, and help ensure USPS can better serve the American people. Kaine remains committed to ensuring that the legislation is efficiently and properly implemented. In May 2023, Kaine pressed USPS on mail delivery issues after hearing from constituents across the Commonwealth.

In addition to Kaine, Durbin, and Collins, the bill was cosponsored by U.S. Senators Jerry Moran (R-KS), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Ron Wyden (D-OR), John Hickenlooper (D-CO), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Chris Coons (D-DE), Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV), and Angus King (I-ME).

The Postal Police Reform Act is endorsed by the National Association of Postal Supervisors and the Postal Police Officers Association.