

August 25, 2020

RE: Senate Government Operations Committee – voting and elections

Americans over 50 vote by absentee more than any other age group. On behalf of our more than 130,000 Vermont members and all older Vermonters statewide, we have and will continue to advocate for safe, secure and accessible elections and methods of voting.

The pandemic is threatening the health and financial security of 50+ Vermonters and now, more than ever, there are critical issues on the line in this election for those aged 50+. That's why AARP is fighting to protect 50+ voters on the issues that matter, like expanding rural broadband connectivity and lowering prescription drug prices. And our national polling shows that our members and 50+ voters are concerned about how to vote safely because of the pandemic.

AARP has adapted to the reality of the 2020 election year. We're working hard to make sure voters can vote safely and know their voting options. As part of our election education and outreach, AARP Vermont will be sending about 70,000 Vermont households direct mail pieces that outline different options for voting in the November 3<sup>rd</sup> election – from voting at the polls safely to voting from home. The first of these educational mailers will reach our members by the end of this month, with a second mail piece scheduled for early October. We have already begun promoting how Vermonters can vote safely and securely through social media and email blasts to our members.

Many Vermonters, especially those without internet access, rely on the Postal Service to deliver vital information about their health and finances. Simply put, throughout this crisis, the Postal Service has demonstrated its vital role in our society – allowing people of all ages to stay home, stay informed, and stay safe.

The Postal Service is a lifeline for older Vermonters, especially those in rural communities, as well as those with medical conditions who are most at risk from the coronavirus. More than ever before, people are relying on the USPS to deliver their lifesaving prescription medications and other necessities, allowing them to remain safely at home. Vermonters with chronic conditions -- such as high blood pressure, diabetes and asthma -- who need prescription medicines on an ongoing basis are most at-risk if they contract the coronavirus.

That is why we urged the USPS to suspend any adjustments that could negatively affect service during the pandemic. Further, we urged the Postal Service to be more forthcoming and transparent regarding any changes, including a more detailed cost-benefit analysis of the operational changes that were made and will be making to assure timely delivery of all mail, including election-related mail.

We will remain vigilant to protect people in rural communities and we will keep the pressure on Washington to make sure that the USPS can continue to operate effectively and efficiently.

Sincerely,

Greg Marchildon

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Marchildon', written in a cursive style.

AARP Vermont State Director