

STATE OF COLORADO
Department of State

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October 26, 2018

Gregory G. Graves
Vice President, Area Operations – Western Area
1745 Stout Street, Suite 1000
Denver, CO 80299

Re: Adams County mail ballot delivery issues

Dear Mr. Graves:

Thank you for the very productive phone call today. I appreciate that you already identified process improvements to prevent future incidents like the one in Adams County last week. Our office looks forward to working with you and your team to ensure that Colorado's postal mail ballot delivery process continues to lead the nation and that Colorado voters continue to have easy and convenient ways to receive and return their ballots.

This letter is meant to document what happened last week and to assure you that our office will work with you and your team to implement the specific processes you mentioned today.

The relevant details, as I understand them, are as follows:

- Adams County, through its print vendor, secured a Facility Access and Shipment Tracking (FAST) appointment for October 15, 2018, to deliver the bulk of its general election mail ballots to the USPS's General Mail Facility (GMF) in Denver;
 - The shipping vendor hired by K&H, Adams County's printer, filled four trucks with Adams County's ballots for delivery to the GMF, and arrived at the GMF with all four trucks on the day of its FAST appointment;
- After unloading three of the four trucks, staff at the GMF rejected the fourth truck—filled with nearly 61,000 ballots—apparently due to a paperwork issue. K&H provided Adams County with documentation showing that the paperwork did not vary from the other 14 trucks the shipping vendor successfully delivered to the GMF that day. The truck was moved from its position on the dock and did not return;
- After rejection from the GMF, the shipping vendor's driver returned the truck containing the ballots to the shipper's lot;
 - The shipping vendor did not notify Adams County or the print vendor of the rejection, and instead left the truck sitting in its lot for several days (a breakdown in communication that Adams County and the print vendor are currently addressing);
- On October 22, after receiving questions from concerned voters who hadn't yet received their ballots, Adams County began investigating whether all ballots were mailed;
 - The Adams County Clerk Stan Martin, the print vendor, and USPS staff made significant efforts to identify the issue and locate the ballots, however the relevant staff at Clerk Martin's office, USPS, and the print vendor were initially unaware of the most-critical fact—that the GMF had rejected an entire truck-full of ballots;

- On October 23, Adams County's print vendor discovered that the shipping vendor had the fourth truck on its lot with ballots still inside;
 - After learning that Adams County had additional ballots to deliver, our office contacted USPS to ask that USPS expedite delivery; USPS agreed. During the call with our office, USPS did not acknowledge that it had rejected the ballots more than a week earlier;
- Adams County, its vendors, and USPS worked in cooperation to expedite the delivery and get the ballots to the GMF and out to voters the next day;
 - During delivery of the ballots to the GMF, USPS staff informed Secretary of State staff that USPS had indeed rejected the ballots during the first attempted delivery.

I want to express my sincere appreciation for your work in expediting the ballots' delivery after their redelivery to the GMF. While Colorado voters do have the option of voting in person, most prefer the ability to mark and return the ballot delivered to their home. The expedited delivery enabled almost all of the affected voters to still have a 13-day period to mark and return their ballots.


I'm confident that you and I share the same goal of timely, accurate delivery of mail ballots to Colorado's voters. That's why I was grateful that you began our call today with a description of several process improvements that you identified to prevent a reoccurrence. My understanding of these improvements is the following:

- A. At least one dedicated dock at the GMF where counties and their vendors can deliver ballots during the ballot-mailing period;
- B. A process to ensure that trucks filled with ballots are neither rejected nor asked to pull away from the dock before rectifying any issues and unloading ballots;
- C. Increased data sharing with our office including the number of ballots in USPS's possession, along with information about when they are delivered;
- D. Increased sharing of intelligent mail barcode information by vendors before delivery so that the USPS can more accurately track the status of ballots; and
- E. Prompt communication with my office if there ever are any ballots that cannot be accepted for delivery or any other event occurs that impairs the delivery or receipt of Coloradans' ballots.

Taken together these improvements create three new checks to ensure that ballots are delivered in a timely manner. (1) A and B should ensure that the issue does not arise again. (2) C and D should ensure that if somehow the issue were to arise that the USPS as well as the county and its vendors would know and be able to respond within 24 hours. (3) E will ensure that my office is made aware of issues so that we can assist or step in as appropriate. We similarly will be working with counties and their vendors to provide additional assurances.

We look forward to working with you and your team to implement these process improvements and continue to improve our communication. Thank you so much for your partnership and cooperation.

Very truly yours,


 Wayne W. Williams
 Colorado Secretary of State

cc:
 Stan Martin, Adams County Clerk and Recorder