



Feb. 17, 2026

Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC)
901 New York Ave NW Ste 200
Washington DC 20268

Re: Order No. 9427 (Docket # RM2024-4, RM2022-5, RM2022-6, RM2021-2)

For the Record:

We are writing in response to PRC Order No. 9427, which invites stakeholders to respond to the Postal Service's petition seeking the complete removal of the CPI price cap governing its rate authority or, in the alternative, to grant it an additional 22 percentage points of rate authority. Our organization, which represents 32 magazines published by America's rural electric cooperatives, is a member of the Alliance of Nonprofit Mailers (ANM), and we support its comments opposing the Postal Service's petition. We would like to provide the following information as additional data in support of ANM's position.

The Statewide Editors Association represents 32 statewide magazines that reach nearly 20 million readers every month in 42 states served by rural electric cooperatives. Combined, statewide magazines are the third largest consumer publication in the United States.

The July 2025 increase affected rural electric cooperatives more than double the amount of other periodicals by 15 to 28 percent. As a result, circulation among our magazines has dropped by 3.6 million copies annually, an estimated 300,000 per month. This reduction is directly related to postage increases, as our cooperatives continue to face the challenge of increased operating costs, tariffs and energy prices, and must make cuts to ensure electricity is kept as affordable as possible. It goes without saying that these cuts are hurting member engagement at a time when being informed is essential and many members will be disenfranchised.

Specifically, circulation has dropped from 10.1 million per month to 9.785 million per month, on average, and from 121.2 million to 118 million annually. The current postage costs average \$2.78 million per month and \$28 million annually. Many of our magazines have seen at least a 50 to 60 percent increase in postage over the past five years.

The above numbers apply to magazines and essential communications to cooperative members which are required by cooperative bylaws. But cooperatives also rely on the US Postal Service to deliver billing statements and other direct mail pieces in a timely fashion. The increases and reduction in delivery times continue to disproportionately and negatively impact rural America, 90 percent of our members.

Many of our members do not have access to the internet, and if they do, many find it unaffordable. Thus, our magazines provide a vital source of news and information to rural America, which is rapidly becoming a “news desert.” Surveys have shown that 82.2 percent of our members prefer a print publication which they have trusted for many years.

We know print is the most effective form of communication, yet many of our magazines have no choice other than to make drastic changes to control cost. Those changes range from providing digital solutions, reducing the number of pages due to postal penalties on advertising, and reducing the frequency of our printed magazines. Finally, removing CPI caps and final review by PRC will create an unpredictable and unsustainable channel of communication to our members.

We urge the Commission to consider the impact the magnitude of USPS price increases have on organizations such as ours in considering proposals for changing the USPS rate system.

Sincerely,

Statewide Editors Association

Lenore Vickrey, Alabama, President

Leon Espinoza, Oregon, Vice President

Cally Peterson, North Dakota, Secretary-Treasurer