Chairperson Waymaster and Members of the Committee:

My name is Bob Stuart and I serve as the Executive Officer for the Kansas Bureau of Investigation (KBI). Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in response to your request on physical mail security threats.

Public officials continue to be targets for extremists who encourage other like-minded individuals to incite violence and/or chaos to cause fear and disrupt ordinary government operations. These actions are often justified by perceived government and law enforcement overreach, or opposition to legislative changes. The ideologies are magnified by misinformation and conspiracy theory.

According to data provided by the United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) there were 1,802 suspicious mail incidents in the United States in 2022, down slightly from 2,010 incidents in 2021. These incidents involve suspicious items, substances, powders or liquids, threats, hoaxes or improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Immediate response to these threats comes from local police and fire departments, hazmat teams and EOD/Bomb squads. The majority of incidents are then investigated by the USPIS, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and/or the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) Bomb Data Center (BDC).

Approximately 40% of incidents are directed at federal and state government targets. Nearly 80% of the cases deemed to be dangerous mail incidents consist of threats containing white powder alleged to be hazardous material (biologics or chemicals) or illicit drugs. While detailed data points have not been reported, almost all of these incidents turn out to be hoaxes.

The USPIS is the authority on mail security. A USPIS poster providing examples of suspicious mail is attached and made a part of this written testimony.

**What Should Employees/Family Members Do if They Receive an Unexpected/Suspicious Piece of Mail?**

- First, check the return address and if it can be done safely, ID visible surfaces, recipient, postmark data and physical description.
- If you don’t recognize it, contact the security office and they should attempt to contact the sender.
- Don’t open or touch the suspicious item and isolate the item.
• Maintain a safe distance from the suspicious item.
• Wash your hands with soap and warm water.
• Alert others to the potential problem.
• Contact law enforcement and emergency medical personnel.
• Call USPIS at 866-876-2455 and state “EMERGENCY.”

The KBI stands ready to answer any questions you may have, or provide additional documentation within our possession. As always, we appreciate your time and the opportunity to speak in front of this committee.

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SUSPICIOUS MAIL OR PACKAGES

Protect yourself, your business, and your mailroom.

If you receive a suspicious letter or package:

- Stop. Don’t handle.
- Isolate it immediately.
- Don’t open, smell, or taste.
- Activate your emergency plan. Notify a supervisor.

If you suspect the mail or package contains a bomb (explosive), or radiological, biological, or chemical threat:

- Isolate area immediately
- Call 911
- Wash your hands with soap and water

To order this poster, call 1-800-332-0117