

ACCOUNTABLE^{US}

August 24, 2020

Robert M. Duncan
Chairman
USPS Board of Governors
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington, DC 20260

Mr. Duncan,

With an expected onslaught of requests by Americans for mail-in ballots leading up to the 2020 election and repeated attacks by President Trump on the efficacy of voting by mail, it is essential now more than ever that those at the helm of the United States Postal Service (USPS) have the best interests of the American people, and the postal service as an institution, driving their actions. Due to your extensive past involvement in voter disenfranchisement efforts, we call on you to resign from the USPS Board of Governors.

Your history raises significant concerns about your commitment to ensuring free, fair, and accessible voting. During your tenure as general counsel of the Republican National Committee and as a member of the Kentucky Republican Party's executive committee, numerous state parties — including Kentucky's — were accused of coordinated voter suppression efforts via the banned practice of voter caging¹ in an attempt to sway the 2004 election.²

Despite the Republican National Committee being forbidden from conducting voter caging by a court-ordered consent decree in 1982,³ accusations surrounding Kentucky's 2004 election suggest that you may have overseen this type of voter suppression — primarily in majority-minority metropolitan areas.⁴ Your role in the potential voter suppression tactic deployed by Kentucky's Republican Party is particularly suspect given your positions in both the state party and the Republican National Committee, as internal emails suggest the groups were in close coordination to carry out these efforts.⁵

Your history in Kentucky alone should be reason for grave concern about your ability to protect Americans' access to voting. But paired with the Republican National Committee's 2008 effort to reverse the voter caging ban while you served as Chairman,⁶ you have demonstrated that you do not have the requisite commitment to preserving our democracy and have no place serving on the USPS Board of Governors, let alone as its chairman, at this critical time.

¹ The Brennan Center for Justice defines "voter caging" as "the practice of sending mail to addresses on the voter rolls, compiling a list of the mail that is returned undelivered, and using that list to purge or challenge voters registrations on the grounds that the voters on the list do not legally reside at their registered addresses." [Brennan Center for Justice, 6/29/07]

² The Hill, June 4, 2012

³ Justia Law Blog, March 13, 2012

⁴ PR Newswire, October 28, 2010

⁵ Project Vote, February 2010

⁶ Justia Law Blog, March 13, 2012

An issue of additional concern is your role overseeing a series of bigoted voter outreach materials as a member of Kentucky's Republican Party Executive Committee and Central Committee. In 2007, during your time in state party leadership, the Kentucky Republican Party deployed homophobic ads calling a Democratic candidate for governor a "sexual radical."⁷ Similarly, in 2014, you served in state party leadership during the distribution of mailers that compared granting undocumented immigrants driver's licenses to the terrorist acts of 9/11 — complete with pictures of a burning World Trade Center.⁸ Your approval — tacit or otherwise — of such hateful rhetoric should be disqualifying for anyone serving in the public trust.

As we continue to weather the COVID-19 public health crisis and infection risk remains high, experts expect to see more requests to vote by mail than during any previous election cycle. It is therefore more crucial than ever that USPS leaders are committed to protecting voters' — *all* voters' — ability to cast mail-in ballots easily, efficiently, and successfully. Your extensive history of involvement in voter disenfranchisement efforts prove that you are not fit to fulfill that solemn responsibility. Therefore, we ask that you immediately step down from the USPS Board of Governors.

Sincerely,

Kyle Herrig, President
Accountable.US

⁷ Lexington Herald Leader, November 11, 2007

⁸ Washington Post Blogs, October 31, 1007