

Mail from A1

funding coupled with his criticism of voting by mail.

Earlier the same day as the story broke, the president said in an interview with FOX Business Network's Maria Bartiromo that he was averse to providing the funding because it would restrict mail-in voting.

"Now, if we don't make a deal, that means they don't get the money. That means they can't have universal mail-in voting, they just can't have it," Trump said in the interview.

Photos of mailboxes being hauled off were

circulated as newly-appointed USPS Postmaster General Louis DeJoy had begun making significant changes to the agency, which critics said were efforts to purposefully slow down the country's mail system.

The combination of these events has sparked concern among Oregonians that USPS blue boxes are being carted away as a result of the president's strategy to help his reelection chances.

As well as declining mail volume, USPS spokespeople have attributed the removal of the blue boxes to areas which already have multiple boxes, in essence removing redundancies.

A factsheet on the USPS website states that mail volume steadily dropped from 155.5 billion units in 2014 to 142.6 billion units in 2019.

In 2011, a *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* report stated that the USPS had removed more than 60 percent of its blue boxes since 1985, indicating a decades-old trend with the agency.

On Aug. 16, the USPS stated that it will halt the removal of mailboxes for 90 days, citing "recent customer concerns" and that the removals were adjustments made to match resources with a declining mail volume.

The agency has a process in which it counts

the amount of mail carried through the blue boxes each year and the addition or removal of boxes is in part based on this count.

Berry said she could not remember Cottage Grove removing any mail collection boxes in the last 14 years she has worked in the area.

While she could not speak to the reason of the mailbox removals in Eugene and Portland, Berry said there were no local plans to touch Cottage Grove USPS boxes.

"I know that nobody has taken anything out here and nobody's informed us that they are," she said.

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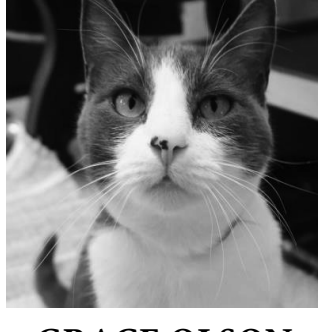
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