



A bold voice for transportation workers

ATTACKS ON THE POSTAL SERVICE: PLEASE RETURN TO SENDER

The United States Postal Service (USPS) and its hundreds of thousands of hard working employees provide an integral and irreplaceable service, delivering mail via almost every mode of transportation to every community in the nation, and helping to keep our economy running. It does so without the use of taxpayer funding, and despite Washington's unceasing interest in putting obstacles in its way.

In recent months, both the White House and some in Congress have launched attacks on postal workers and the USPS. This has included assaults we have long been familiar with, as well as new lines of attack. These proposals are a solution in search of a problem, and largely ignore the fact that 92% of USPS' losses since 2007 stem from Congress' unprecedented decision to require it to prefund its retiree health benefits, not any real operational shortfall. We call on Congress to ensure that the Postal Service remains an independent government agency and the jobs and rights of its workforce are protected. We also call on the Administration to abandon its pursuit of wrongheaded and dangerous reforms that would only serve to undermine the USPS mission.

In June, a White House Task Force published a report containing recommendations on such reforms of the Postal Service. Instead of championing the sound proposals offered by postal unions, the report demonizes workers and the very foundations of collective bargaining. Leaving no stone unturned, the Administration calls for ending the ability of postal workers to bargain for higher wages, reducing wages and cutting retirement benefits. This naked attack on postal employees and basic labor rights would have catastrophic impacts on workers and their families who rely on the good benefits and wages provided by careers with the Postal Service. Punishing workers for the choices of Congress is immoral and unacceptable.

The report goes further to suggest that once the Postal Service balances its books on the backs of its employees, it should then be privatized. We know that privatization will inevitably lead to increased rates and reduced services, particularly in rural communities. This would hamstring USPS' ability to carry out its core missions and obligations to serve every community. Last year, Congress issued a strong rebuke to this proposal and other privatization schemes with bipartisan resolutions in both chambers (H.Res.993/S.Res. 633), and will consider similar resolutions this year. Congress must continue to stand against all such proposals that seek to destroy USPS as we know it.

Further, these proposals come at a time when USPS is achieving record revenues from parcel shipping. In FY'17, revenue from packages spiked by \$2.1 billion. This revenue is largely the result of increased business from e-commerce providers, and demonstrates USPS' continued evolution to serving a changing economy. Yet even this positive development has come under attack from a President who does not understand the operations and finances of our Postal Service. USPS must be allowed to pursue new models of business, unencumbered by outside and misguided interference.

Finally, Congress must not allow opponents to hijack unrelated proposals to push anti-postal service measures. Last year, the President signed a large package of bills that sought to address the opioid crisis. This included the STOP Act, which claims to combat the international shipping of opioids but in reality places untenable burdens and financial penalties on the USPS in the hope of further moving the needle towards privatization. We remain disappointed that USPS opponents used legislation intended to address something as critical as opioid addiction as a vehicle to harm USPS and its workers. We call on our allies in Congress to ensure that future proposals like this are brought to light and rejected.

USPS plays an essential role in the lives of millions of Americans and our national economy. We must not allow ill-informed proposals to stand in the way of reliable and affordable mail service, and thousands of good-paying union jobs. Privatization and other damaging schemes are not, and cannot be, the way forward.

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