



MARK A. GARDNER, National Secretary-Treasurer

With only a few months remaining until the 2014 mid-term Congressional elections, now is a great time for Mail Handlers to ramp up their political activity, and to actively support those candidates for Congress who have actively supported the interests of Mail Handlers and the concerns of America's working families.

As is the case every two years, the entire House of Representatives and a third of the Senate will face election this November. And with so much upheaval and dysfunction throughout our legislative branch, Mail Handlers will have yet another opportunity to help shape a better, more productive tone on Capitol Hill—and to work towards a more worker-friendly Congressional majority—that will help working-class Americans to reclaim their rightful place in our country's social and economic structure.

The results of this election are extremely important for Mail Handlers, as Congress continues its long slog through proposals related to postal reform legislation, and its active involvement in the ongoing debate over the future of the United States Postal Service—including its finances, the mail processing network, service standards or levels, delivery frequency, labor issues, the competitive environment, and the overall place in the ever-growing digital world. Elsewhere in this publication, we have detailed many of the important issues related to the ongoing postal reform debate. Suffice it to say that the political climate in Washington, DC—and the political power of all stakeholders—will continue to drive the options for change in the Postal Service.

With the situation as it is in the USPS, combined with the host of other issues of concern to working families across America, it is important that we elect candidates who are committed to

PREPARING FOR POLITICAL BATTLE: THE 2014 MID-TERM ELECTIONS

supporting our needs and desires, and those of all working Americans. Generally speaking, it is the Democratic Party that has stood behind the efforts and goals of the working class. That is why it is as important as ever to—in the words of labor movement icon Sam Gompers—“reward our friends, and punish our enemies” in this mid-term Congressional election.

Your Union's leadership certainly recognizes the tremendous partisan divide that exists in our country, and we remain mindful that the workforce of the United States Postal Service (our nation's second-largest civilian employer) and the membership of the National Postal Mail Handlers Union represent microcosms of our American society. Given those realities, your leadership also is aware that most, but certainly not all, NPMHU members will agree that the Democratic Party provides the greatest vehicle to promote a worker-friendly agenda. Please know that the political efforts of your union are aimed at ensuring that all NPMHU members are aware of the clear philosophical and substantive differences between the parties and the candidates—particularly with regard to those issues that directly affect both workplace and pocketbook.

Smart labor unions have long known that effective representation begins with being actively engaged in the process of developing a framework of laws that treats workers fairly. The most skilled negotiator, advocate, or steward cannot easily overcome a bad law. The labor family has made great strides in recent years in identifying and supporting candidates for political office

who have demonstrated their commitment to supporting and passing legislation that is good for working families.

While we certainly share many ideals with the Democratic Party, the labor movement's commitment to putting working families first must trump any other ideological differences or local political sensitivities. The very survival of organized labor and our working class is at stake. We can no longer afford to offer our resources and networks to any candidate who is unwilling to defend working families as proposals wind their way through the murky legislative process.

So as we prepare for the battle this November, please take the first steps. If you are not currently registered to vote, please do so. And remind your family, friends, and neighbors to do the same. And remain engaged in the political and legislative debate. Know where your Representative and Senators, and rival candidates, stand on legislation affecting the future of the Postal Service – and your very livelihood. And know where they stand on issues of equity in the workplace, and minimum wage, and organized labor, and the myriad issues that affect the working class each and every day.

Prepare now for victory in November.

Fraternally,

Mark A. Gardner
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