



## National Postal Mail Handlers Union

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

# THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

Dear Members,

**A**s 2014 starts, we face many of the same problems within the Postal Service as in prior years. I need not repeat them all here, as we've publicized them many times before. Let me just give you an update on a few items.

Regarding the ongoing issue of postal reform, it seems that no one in Congress is willing to offer a "clean" postal bill that would assist the Postal Service, without attacking the dedicated men and women who move the mail every day. A "clean" bill would contain the following: (1) adjusting the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund and revising the Federal Employee Health Benefit Plan to reduce retiree health costs and resolve the prefunding burden by properly investing the assets in the PSRHBF and having our current and future retired members enroll in Medicare programs we have helped to fund with our payroll taxes; (2) recalculating the postal pension surpluses with USPS-specific assumptions to help pay down the Postal Service's debt so that it can make desperately needed investments in its infrastructure; (3) establishing a moratorium on service standard changes to prevent continuing mail processing and delivery delays; (4) providing the USPS with limited authority to offer non-postal products through its networks to generate new revenues; and (5) adopting pricing reforms to establish a fair and more reasonable, yet predictable, price cap system.

The Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs held two hearings recently to "mark-up" (or amend) its current version of postal reform legislation, known as S. 1486. All four postal unions banded together to send the key Senators a letter outlining our concerns, and showing them a way forward that preserves overnight service, eliminates the need for additional plant closings, and protects six day delivery (a complete copy of the letter can be found on our website at [www.npmhu.org](http://www.npmhu.org)). Unfortunately, the Senate Committee with jurisdiction over the Postal Service did not take our advice, and passed many provisions out of Committee that, if eventually adopted into law, would further harm service and hurt postal employees. (See the related Article in this issue).

Facility closings and consolidations are on hold for now, as the Postal Service recently pub-



JOHN F. HEGARTY, National President

lished a notice in the Federal Register that indefinitely postpones the changes to the overnight service standards that were to have taken effect on February 1. The bad news is that the Postal Service has retained the right to move forward with those service standard changes (and the resulting closings and consolidations) at any time in the future, by posting another notice in the Federal Register giving notice of ninety days of any changes. You should stay tuned for further developments on this issue, but does it make sense for any business providing a daily service to its customers to announce that it may decide to cut service at some unknown point in the future? How are postal customers and postal employees supposed to plan for the unknown?

On another note, the USPS Office of Inspector General recently released a "white paper" concluding that the Postal Service could generate billions of dollars in new revenue by providing financial services to citizens who currently do not have access to banks, and who therefore depend on overpriced check cashing services and predatory "payday loan" vendors. The report seems to have generated some serious interest on Capitol Hill as a way for the USPS to provide a much-needed service, while generating additional revenues. The report, entitled "Providing Non-Bank Financial Services for the Underserved" can be found on the OIG website at [www.uspsoig.gov](http://www.uspsoig.gov).

Let me take this opportunity to thank all of you, the dues paying members, for your continuing support of our Union, as we work diligently to protect mail handler jobs to maintain and improve our current rights and benefits, and to ensure a strong and viable Postal Service well into the future.

Fraternally,

**John F. Hegarty**  
National President