



National Postal Mail Handlers Union

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National Postal Mail Handlers Union

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

STATE OF THE UNION

Dear Members,

Now that President Obama has delivered his "State of the Union" address, it's my turn. The state of the NPMHU depends on many different factors. In some ways, we are doing well, and, in other areas, there is cause for great concern. Let me elaborate.

As we all know, due mostly to the prolonged recession, mail volume has been way down. With the economy showing some encouraging signs of growth, we can only hope that some of the lost volume will now return to the Postal Service. We are hopeful that when that happens, many of the problems created by this downturn will be resolved.

As a result of this lost mail volume, our membership, and indeed the ranks of all of the postal crafts has continued to decline through attrition. Again, if things pick back up, we can remain hopeful that the reduction in the number of career employees has now bottomed out (but don't hold your breath).

Along with attrition, mail handlers (and again, this is happening in all crafts) have been negatively affected by having their jobs abolished, their tours and hours changed, and in some cases they have been excessed out of their home Installation to a more distant work location. While we realize how disruptive this can be, if management is acting in accordance with Article 12, it is extremely difficult for the Union to meet its burden of proof when challenging these actions. In some situations, the National Office's Article 12 Task Force has been successful in settling these issues outside of the grievance procedure. We are working



JOHN F. HEGARTY, National President

with the 37 Local Unions, on a case by case basis, to try to alleviate any hardships on the affected mail handlers.

The Postal Service allegedly "lost" over 8.5 billion dollars last year, but that's not the real story. It's a bit complicated, but, in a nutshell, most of that "loss" (approximately 8 billion) was caused by accounting methods related to the CSRS and FERS pension payments, and a charge from the U.S. Department of Labor for workers compensation costs due to a change in interest rates. If the overfunding of the CSRS and FERS monies that USPS has already paid were applied to the health care pre-funding requirement that was established by the 2006 PAEA, the USPS actually would have made a profit in 2 of the last 3 years.

To make matters even more complicated, we now have many of our elected representatives (Senators and Representatives) going on the offensive against all federal and postal employees. We need to fight back vigorously to protect our interests. Please refer to the separate Articles in this issue for detailed information.

With all of this going on, both the National Union and the Local Unions have planned ahead, and are still offering top-notch representation under difficult circumstances. All necessary grievances continue to be filed when