

# MIDTERM ELECTIONS SEE CHANGE IN HOUSE MAJORITY

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Heading into the 2022 Midterm Elections, most polls predicted a “Red Wave,” with Republicans gaining a strong majority in the House of Representatives, Democrats struggling to hold onto the Senate, and a host of important State elections at risk of being dominated by anti-democratic election deniers. Despite the GOP touting the poor approval ratings of President Biden and inflation causing financial hardships in most households, and some benefits from Census-based redistricting, Republicans were only able to win a slim majority in the House. Meanwhile, Democrats flipped Pennsylvania’s Senate seat from red to blue, and thus when this article is printing, the Democrats will remain in control of the Senate irrespective of the outcome in the race for U.S. Senator from Georgia.

Now with a Democratic led Senate and a Democratic President, but Republicans in the majority in the House, expectations are that it will be difficult to move legislation forward. In addition to expected gridlock on Capitol Hill, Mail Handlers have already started to hear anti-labor rhetoric from House Republican leadership. In late September, projected soon-to-be Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy (R-CA-20) released the *Commitment to America*, which called to “keep the most critical government programs running efficiently and effectively, with proper oversight.” While this might come off as

appropriate fiscal responsibility, in the past these calls for action have resulted in threats against not only against postal retirement benefits, but also healthcare and federal services that Mail Handlers and the rest of the American public rely on. Moving forward, the Mail Handlers Union will remind Republican leadership of the value of these earned benefits and necessary services.

## NPMHU TESTIFIES ON PREPAREDNESS FOR PEAK SEASON

As the NPMHU is preparing to play defense in the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress before it starts in January, it must continue to play offense during the remaining days at the end of the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress. So on November 16, 2022 National President Hogrogian testified before the House Subcommittee on Government Operations. Led by Subcommittee Chairman Gerry Connolly (D-VA-11) and Subcommittee Ranking Member Jody Hice (R-GA-10), the subcommittee asked the question: is the United States Postal Service ready for the 2022 peak season? In his opening statement, President Hogrogian testified, “Yes, the Postal Service is ready for the holiday rush expected during 2022, as long as its Mail Handlers and the rest of our fellow postal employees have the necessary resources available to them.”

Throughout the hearing, Members of Congress and the various witnesses testifying brought up the struggles

the Postal Service, its employees, and customers faced in the 2020 peak season. As Chairman Connolly pointed out in his opening statement, performance back in 2020 was only at 67%. President Hogrogian explained that this was due to staffing issues caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, increases in parcel volume, the growing reliance on mail-in ballot initiatives used by eligible voters, and changes in the network. Over the past two years, however, the Postal Service has worked to overcome these performance issues. Tammy Hull with the USPS Office of Inspector General (OIG) stated that her office has been working to quickly identify problems and review readiness. Because of this work, from the OIG’s perspective, the Postal Service is ready for the 2022 peak season. However, Ed Carley, President of the United Postmasters and Managers of America (UPMA), raised concerns that management is short staffed. Regardless of this obstacle, he declared that UPMA is committed to on-time delivery. In a closing statement, Committee on Oversight and Reform Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney noted the vital need for the Postal Service as it binds the nation together, as well as the duty of all stakeholders to oversee improvements to promote performance.”

President Hogrogian's written testimony is on the following pages, and to view the full hearing, please visit the NPMHU website.