

PMG DEJOY RELEASES DELIVERING FOR AMERICA 10 YEAR PLAN

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A flurry of postal activity has been happening on Capitol Hill since the last edition of the *Mail Handler*. The USPS issued its ten-year plan as a means to provide fiscal stability; President Biden nominated and the Senate confirmed three new members to the Board of Governors; the House and Senate introduced, on a bipartisan basis, the Postal Reform Act of 2021 (H.R. 3076 and S. 1720), legislation supported by the NPMHU; and, the House introduced a separate bill, H.R. 3077, to address postal transparency, revenue growth, and expanding employee benefits.

President Hogrogian goes into greater detail on the pros and cons of the ten-year plan in his article, but Postmaster General DeJoy's support for postal reform legislation should be reiterated. In the ten-year plan, entitled *Delivering for America*, DeJoy and the Board of Governors called upon members of Congress to pass legislation that would repeal the 2006 mandate to prefund retiree healthcare benefits, while also requiring future retirees to enroll in Medicare when eligible. The mandate is the cause of an annual loss of \$5 billion over ten years and has been the primary cause of the Postal Service's financial deficits since 2013. Meanwhile, Medicare integration would take financial pressure off of the Postal Service Retirement Health Fund's unfunded liability. Postal employees have contributed over \$35 billion to Medicare over the past four decades, while not fully taking advantage of its benefits. Repeal and integration would save the USPS \$44 billion over eight years.

These actions are the mainstay of the bipartisan Postal Reform Act of 2021, H.R. 3076 and S. 1720.

After dedicated negotiations between House Committee on Oversight and Reform (COR) Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney (D-NY-12) and Ranking Member James Comer (R-KY-01), they introduced the bipartisan House bill on May 11. Their negotiations tried to take account of the needs of postal stakeholders, including the NPMHU and other unions. H.R. 3076 also addresses other items on the NPMHU legislative agenda. First, the bill allows for the Postal Service to enter agreements with state, local, or tribal governments to provide property and services on behalf of such agencies for non-commercial products and services, such as providing fishing and hunting licenses, thereby providing a source of

additional revenue growth for the Postal Service. Second, the bill codifies a six-day delivery standard, ensuring postal customers will receive first class mail and parcels to which they are accustomed.

NPMHU members are keenly aware of the issues caused from mail delays due to service standard changes last summer. Union members as well as postal customers saw significant delays that impacted the delivery of medications, caused late fees for bill payments, and generally undermined the reliability of the Postal Service. In order to reassure customers and provide greater transparency, H.R. 3076 calls for the creation of a public-facing dashboard website that informs USPS customers about delays. Furthermore, the bill calls for studies on the financial status of the Postal Service and would provide qualitative data on standards, providing necessary information on the performance of the Postal Service.

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H.R. 3076 quickly passed within the Committee with bipartisan support and now heads to both the House Committee on Ways and Means and the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, as both of these bodies have jurisdiction over Medicare issues. Ongoing discussions with these committee members have been promising, and they appear eager to move the bill forward. There is additional support for these bills from House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA-12) and Democratic Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD-05).

Upon its passage in COR, Chairwoman Maloney stated, "We have accomplished something historic today. We moved legislation to put the Postal Service on a more secure financial footing, enhance transparency, and improve service. I am proud that this bill to strengthen the Postal Service

was approved by the Oversight Committee on a strong bipartisan basis.”

Quickly following COR’s lead, the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee (HSGAC) Chairman Gary Peters (D-MI) and Ranking Member Rob Portman (R-OH) introduced identical language on May 19, bill number S. 1720. The Senate bill is also cosponsored by Senators Tina Smith (D-MN), Mike Rounds (R-SD), Roy Blunt (R-MO), Brian Schatz (D-HI), Josh Hawley (R-MO), Joe Manchin (D-WV), Dan Sullivan (D-AK), Ron Wyden (D-OR), Susan Collins (R-ME), Alex Padilla (D-CA), Steve Daines (R-MT), Jacky Rosen (D-NV), Shelly Capito (R-WV), Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ), Thomas Tillis (R-NC), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Richard Burr (R-NC), and Tom Carper (D-DE). With this amount of support, if S. 1720 were to come to the Senate floor for a vote, it would pass.

Upon the bill’s introduction, Chairman Peters commented, “This commonsense, bipartisan legislation would help put the Postal Service on a sustainable financial footing, ensure it is more transparent and accountable to the American people, and support hardworking postal workers who deliver rain or shine to communities all across the country. I am proud to lead this bipartisan effort in the Senate and stand ready to work with my colleagues to move this bill through Congress.”

With H.R. 3076 and S. 1720 heavily negotiated to ensure bipartisanship, the Postal Service Improvement Act, H.R. 3077, was introduced separately to address more contentious proposals, and was passed in COR along party lines. This bill initially contained language to provide ballot tracking for those participating in vote by mail and to guarantee paid parental leave for postal employees. The ballot tracking provision also appears in a stand-alone bill, H.R. 1307, the Vote by Mail Tracking Act, which calls for mail-in ballots to be barcoded by the Postal Service for tracking purposes. In a hearing before COR, PMG DeJoy testified in support of the H.R. 1307. H.R. 3077 also would extend paid parental leave to postal employees, providing for up to 12 weeks for the birth of a child, the adoption of a child, and the fostering of a child, a benefit that already is provided to the rest of the federal workforce.

During the mark-up session of H.R. 3077, amendments were added, including provisions that would fund an electric vehicle fleet for the Postal Service; restore service standards back to January 1, 2021 levels; require financial disclosures from

the Postmaster General and the Deputy Postmaster General before they assume duties; and guarantee access to all Members of Congress to enter any postal facility for the purpose of conducting oversight.

Along with these great steps towards postal reform, the NPMHU saw support for another legislative agenda item. Representative Jackie Speier (D-CA-14) and Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR) introduced the bipartisan USPS Shipping Equity Act as H.R. 3287 and S. 1163. This legislation would allow for the Postal Service to ship alcohol, the same as their private carrier counterparts. Over the past five years, online sales of alcohol have grown by 12 percent, amounting to over \$1 billion. If the USPS had the same access to shipping alcohol, the Congressional Budget Office estimates an additional \$50 million a year in revenue for the Postal Service.

In addition to these legislative accomplishments, President Biden nominated three members to the Postal Board of Governors. On April 22, former Deputy PMG Ron Stroman, Vote at Home Institute CEO Amber McReynolds, and former APWU counsel Anton Hajjar testified before the Senate Committee on what they saw as impediments to the USPS mission and goals, and what they thought was necessary to improve the agency. All nominees commented that it is imperative to stabilize the Postal Service’s finances, and Stroman specifically called out the need for bipartisan support from Congress in order to develop postal reform that successfully addresses this. The nominees also spoke to the need for improving delivery and performance as the Postal Service is vital to residences and businesses alike in urban, rural, and suburban communities. The Senate confirmed Stroman, McReynolds, and Hajjar

on May 12, 13, and 28, respectively. The NPMHU looks forward to working with these new Board members.

A lot has happened in the months of April and May, and NPMHU expects more developments to come and quite possibly to come quickly. Please check back in at the NPMHU website for any updates.



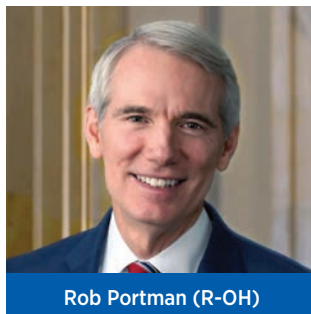
Gary Peters (D-MI)



James Comer (R-KY-01)



Carolyn Maloney (D-NY-12)



Rob Portman (R-OH)