



June 2, 2014

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the nearly 650,000 active and retired employees of the U.S. Postal Service represented by our four unions, we write to express our firm opposition to using the United States Postal Service as an offset to fund the nation's transportation infrastructure. Last week, House Majority Leader Eric Cantor announced a GOP leadership plan to eliminate Saturday mail delivery service as a means to "pay for" a short-term replenishment of the federal highway trust fund, which is in rapid decline and is expected to run out of money in August. This outrageous and misguided proposal is totally unacceptable and we urge you to oppose it should the idea be presented in the Senate.

Slashing mail delivery service makes no sense in any circumstance, but especially as part of legislation designed to strengthen our nation's transportation infrastructure. The USPS is off-budget and receives no taxpayer support whatsoever. Using the Postal Service as an offset for the Highway Trust Fund is a shell game that relies on illusory savings and accounting gimmicks.

Weakening a core constitutional function of our government in order to avoid making difficult, long-term decisions with regards to our nation's transportation infrastructure is not the answer. It would slow the delivery of mail to your constituents and harm businesses in your district, while imposing hardships on the elderly and rural citizens who most rely on the mail. It would also do more harm than good because it would drive business away from the Postal Service, reducing revenues and offsetting most, if not all, the operational savings. In fact, millions of business mailers (40% of all such mailers) say they want to keep Saturday service; cutting it would be both short-sighted as a business strategy and anti-business as a policy matter.

Calls to eliminate Saturday service are based on misinformation about financial losses at the Postal Service. The Postal Service has recovered from the Great Recession as e-commerce deliveries have boomed and letter mail revenues have stabilized with the economic recovery. If not for the 2006 Congressional mandate to prefund future retiree health care costs decades in advance, the USPS would be reporting profits. The artificial crisis caused by prefunding, which no other private company or independent agency is required to do, cannot be used to justify delivery service cuts to the American people.

The simple fact remains that ending Saturday delivery would eliminate 80,000 full- and part-time jobs in cities and rural areas. Over the last six years, the Postal Service has shed nearly 200,000 jobs in order to right-size itself and get back on track. Cutting additional jobs would impact the local, state and national tax base, and reduce consumer spending in our communities.

Damaging the Postal Service for highways would undercut the Postal Service's recent recovery. America can have a strong, safe highway network without sacrificing a strong, high quality Postal Service. We shouldn't be forced to choose between the two.

We urge you to reject any proposal that would weaken the Postal Service, whether to fund highway construction or any other federal spending priorities. The Postal Service is a self-funded agency financed by postage rate payers – taxing them directly or indirectly to fund other spending is totally unacceptable.

Sincerely,



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National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO



Mark Dimondstein, President
American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO



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Jeanette Dwyer
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