



# National Postal Mail Handlers Union

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March 27, 2020

## President Trump's and Congress' Message to the Postal Service:

### **"DROP DEAD"**

By Paul V. Hogrogian

Congress has passed a historic bi-partisan \$2 Trillion stimulus bill. While the NPMHU applauds many of the provisions contained in the bill such as direct payments to the American public and much needed expanded emergency unemployment benefits for those out of work because of the pandemic, it falls short in providing any significant financial relief for the United States Postal Service. The Senate only allotted for \$10 Billion in borrowing power. That's \$10 Billion for the backbone of the \$1.4 Trillion mailing industry, an industry that's the same size and scope of the hotel and airline industries. But only the mailing industry touches every single American household and has seen demand increase exponentially as a result of COVID-19. Ten Billion dollars is a slap in the face to all postal workers who have been declared to be performing essential federal services during the pandemic, while putting their health and safety at risk. It is extremely ironic that we will be the ones processing and delivering the stimulus checks once they are issued. We are deeply disappointed and outraged at the total lack of respect and consideration that we received from our elected officials.

The Postal Service has been having financial difficulties before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, mainly because of steep declines in first class letter mail and the ridiculous requirement placed upon it by Congress to pre-fund health benefits for its retirees 75 years in advance. The economic downturn caused by the coronavirus and the accompanying further collapse of mail volumes greatly exacerbates the Postal Service's dire financial situation. If the precipitous drop in mail volume continues and Congress fails to provide significant financial relief, the Postal Service will be out of money by this summer.

True postal advocates Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY-12), chairwoman of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Rep. Gerald Connolly (D-VA-11), chairman of the subcommittee that oversees the Postal Service, and Rep. Stephen Lynch (D-MA-08), who serves on the committee, worked on legislative language providing for \$20 billion in emergency payments to the Postal Service along with a provision that would allow for the short term borrowing of an additional \$15 Billion that was included in a House draft stimulus bill. The final version of the bill passed by the Republican-controlled Senate did not provide any financial relief for the Postal Service except for a \$10 Billion line of credit with many strings attached that makes it almost impossible to use. Reports surfaced earlier this week that Postal relief provisions were removed from the bill at the insistence of the Trump White House and Department of Treasury Secretary





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Mnuchin. The final version of the bill does not contain any meaningful financial relief for the Postal Service. While the removal of the Postal Relief provisions of the Stimulus Bill was clearly driven by Senate Republicans, the White House, and the Treasury Department, members of the House and Senate who are self-proclaimed “friends of postal” – those who signed anti-privatization resolutions, support service standards, and advocated for the repeal of the prefunding mandate – need to show this isn’t just lip service as additional stimulus packages move forward. We need to see a harder fight for postal provisions. The needs of the Postal Service and its employees have not been a priority of Congress and the White House. The Postal Service was not deemed worthy of substantial assistance during this crisis. This needs to change immediately.

There will be additional stimulus bills coming before Congress in the near future. Our support has often been taken for granted by members of Congress from both sides of the aisle. This has got to stop. It is imperative that every Mail Handler and every postal worker reach out to their representative as soon as possible to emphasize the extreme urgency to include Postal Relief in any future stimulus bill. The Postal Service cannot become another victim of the COVID-19 virus.

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