



MAIL HANDLER UPDATE

NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION

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MAIL HANDLERS TAKE MESSAGE TO CONGRESS IN PROTEST OF RECKLESS OPERATIONAL CHANGES



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While Senate and House leadership were unable to come to an agreement on emergency financial support for the United States Postal Service, newly appointed Postmaster General Louis DeJoy moved quickly to make operational changes impacting all postal employees. As many NPMHU members are aware, DeJoy implemented a pilot program directly impacting over 300 postal facilities. A month after he took office, DeJoy called for carriers to expedite routes that could result in mail and packages being left behind for a later delivery. Shortly after its implementation, NPMHU members reported a backlog of first-class mail and packages. It also did not take long for American households and businesses to notice the delays as many local media outlets noted neighborhood frustrations, asking for answers.

Multiple members of the House and Senate responded promptly, asking for an explanation of why these operational changes were made and how USPS will ensure the changes will not impact service. DeJoy, however, responded that the changes were within his authority as Postmaster General and the dire financial situation faced by the Postal Service required changes to compensate for revenue losses.

Not satisfied with this response, members of the House and Senate led by Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and Representative Carolyn Maloney (D-NY-12) issued a letter to the USPS Office of the Inspector General, requesting an inquiry into not only operational changes and whether these changes will impact the November 2020 elections, but also if there is a conflict of interest as DeJoy and his wife have tens of millions of dollars invested in USPS subcontracting initiatives.

As days passed, Members of Congress were growing more and more concerned about the impact of operational changes and the mail delays they are causing. Senators reached out to the PMG on how service disruptions will affect the 2020 primary and general elections. Democratic Senators commented, "Under normal circumstances, delayed mail is a major problem — during a pandemic in the middle of a presidential election, it is catastrophic." Furthermore, they asked the PMG to provide information on

the prioritization of election mail; ensure that election mail will not face an increase in rates; and, inquired as to what guidance USPS has provided to state and local election officials in regards to election mail service standards. House Democrats sent their own letter to the PMG, reiterating the sentiments of the Senate and stating, "The House is seriously concerned that you are implementing policies that accelerate the crisis at the Postal Service, including directing Post Offices to no longer treat all election mail as First Class. If implemented now, as the election approaches, this policy will cause further delays to election mail that will disenfranchise voters and put significant financial pressure on election jurisdictions."

Needing legislation to provide service standard assurances, Representative Carolyn Maloney (D-NY-12), Chairwoman of the House Committee on Oversight & Reform, introduced the Delivering for America Act, H.R. 8015. The bill would provide the Postal Service with \$25 billion in emergency appropriations; would suspend any changes to service standards between January 1, 2020 through the end of the COVID-19 pandemic; would prohibit any ban on overtime to ensure that processing continues and that deliveries are made on time; and, would treat election mail as first class mail. Knowing the significance of this legislation, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA-12) called Representatives back to Washington, DC to vote on the bill on Saturday, August 22. That legislation has now passed the House on a bipartisan vote, and awaits (perhaps forever) action in the Republican-controlled Senate. (Please review the NPMHU website for more information about the approval of H.R. 8015.)

The NPMHU met with elected officials in facilities to show first-hand accounts of how operational changes are being seen at the ground level. NPMHU Local 307 Branch President Derek Douglass provided Senator Gary Peters (D-MI), Ranking Member of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, and Representative Brenda Lawrence (D-MI-14), member of the House Oversight and Reform Committee, with a tour of the Michigan Metroplex, explaining how employees were

experiencing cuts to overtime and showed parcel packages that had yet to be sent out for delivery. Similarly, Representative Maloney toured Morgan P&DC with NPMHU Local 300 Vice President Yvette Johnson and Treasurer Willie Delgado to discuss the negative impacts of DeJoy's structural changes. Local 300 President Kevin Tabarus joined Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) at a press conference in front of Melville P&DC, where the Senator urged his Republican counterparts and the White House to support emergency financial funding for the Postal Service. Many other Local leaders, representatives, and members of the NPMHU reported to their congressional representatives about the real facts on the ground in too many facilities to mention in this brief report.

Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA-12) urged members of the House of Representatives to host press conferences on August 18, and more than 70 events across the country occurred. Local 329 President John Macon spoke out at an event with Rep. Steve Cohen (D-TN-09). Neil Ryan and John Bessette of Local 301 participated in an event with Rep. Steve Lynch (D-MA-08). Maxine Waters (D-CA-43), Jimmy Gomez (D-CA-34), and Nannette Barragán (D-CA-44) heard from Local 303 President Eddie Cowan on delays. NPMHU National Secretary-Treasurer Michael Hora stood with Democratic Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD-05), Reps. Anthony Brown (D-MD-04), John Sarbanes (D-MD-03), Don Beyer (D-VA-08), Jennifer Wexton, Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC-At Large), and Sens. Mark Warner (D-VA) and Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) in front of USPS Headquarters to speak to problems caused by delays. The NPMHU would like to recognize and thank all of our officers and members who participated at these press events, spoke out to the media, and attended rallies in order to bring attention to the Postal Service.

New information on the implemented delays and how they affect the Postal Service and its employees is changing daily, if not hourly. Please check back on the NPMHU website to stay up to date.

RETROACTIVE WAGE AND DUES INCREASE

The National Office will soon be implementing a regular membership dues increase in the amount of one dollar (\$1.00) per pay period — of which the Local Union will receive eighty cents (\$.80) per pay period.

This dues increase corresponds to the first general wage increase negotiated in the ratified 2019 National Agreement; that wage increase became effective in PP25-2019. This dues increase is scheduled to be implemented in PP19-2020, to be

reflected in paychecks issued on September 18, 2020. The retroactive amount for the dues increase will result in a one-time collection of an additional \$21.00 representing the increase from PP25-2019 through PP19-2020. Most mail handlers will be debited \$47 on September 18, 2020 and dues will return to the new amount, \$26.00 for most, in PP20-2020. Additionally, the USPS has notified the NPMHU that the retroactive wage payment is tentatively scheduled to be paid in PP 22-2020.



Please Post!!

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