DEAR EDITOR,
I am writing in response to Mike Ford's front page article in the Friday, Nov. 18 Herald regarding the U.S. Postal Service. In it were a couple of points that I felt should be clarified.
He is right when he said that part of the reason the USPS was in financial trouble was due to online bill paying, e-mails, etc., but another reason is the economy as a whole.
Companies that used to do a lot of 1st class and bulk mailings have tightened their belts and really started watching their bottom line to try and save money. The amount of mail we deliver on a daily basis has really dropped in the past few years because of this and this has also contributed to our loss of income.
He also goes on to mention about the $5.5 billion payment we must make to the retirees health fund. He is right when he said that Congress mandated the USPS in 2006 to pre-fund this account.
However, it must be said that Congress mandated us to pre-fund FUTURE retiree health benefits and they ordered it to be a 75-year commitment and that it was to be done in only 10 years. This is the major reason why the Postal Service is hurting financially right now.
In other words, the USPS is being required to pre-fund a health fund for retirees who won't be born for 20 or 30 years yet. No other company in America is required to do this yet they want us to do it, again, a 75-year commitment in only 10 years.
Imagine a bank telling you that they will agree to give you a 35-year house loan but they want it paid back in 10 years.
If not for this mandate, the USPS would have made a profit in every year from 2006 – 2010.
At present, there are several bills being pushed through Congress and I will touch on two of them — H.R. 2309 and H.R. 1351.
H.R. 2309 is sponsored by Rep. Darrell Issa (R-Ca) and is being quickly pushed through Congress. It would radically downsize the Postal Service by mandating a massive round of post office closings, eliminating Saturday delivery, laying off approximately 40-50 thousand workers, cutting health benefits and gutting our collective bargaining rights, the same things that have been happening in Wisconsin, Michigan and Ohio. It would devastate if not destroy the Postal Service, an agency that has been in existence since Benjamin Franklin created it over 200 years ago.
I know some of you may say that it would not matter to you if Saturday's were eliminated but let's look at those who expect us to deliver 6 days a week. Those who rely on us to bring their medicine to them every day, their OSU tickets, birthday and other greeting cards, Amazon, E-Bay, the list goes on and on.
The mailers of these items also rely on us for 6-day delivery.
Now, if they could not rely on us to continue doing this and they still expected delivery 6 days a week, do you think they'd stay with us? No, they'd find another company who would make the commitment to deliver for them.
When talk first arose last year about going to 5-day delivery, a major news agency looked into alternate delivery of their magazines in one of our major metropolitan areas.
H.R. 1351 is another bill being talked about in Congress; the same bill that many of our unions held an informational picket at every Representative's office all over the country on Sept. 27, 2011, for.
Over the years, the Postal Service has contributed to the Civil Service Retirement System and

since 1984 the Federal Employees Retirement System. Two independent agencies did studies as to how much was already in the pension fund and they found that over the years the USPS has been overcharged, and thus, has overpaid this fund $55-75 billion. H.R.1351 would allow the USPS to have access to these funds to meet their obligation to the pre-funding mandate. It would save the Postal Service from devastating cuts and drastically cutting service. This is money that the USPS has paid into this fund, why can't we simply have it back?
That is a question we have tried asking our congressman for a long time now, thus the reason we held that informational picket.
We are asking everyone to contact their Representatives and ask them to preserve 6 day delivery and to please support H.R.1351 and also to oppose H.R.2309. Our local Congressman's phone numbers are: Rep. Jim Jordan (202) 225-2676, for those in the 4th Congressional district; and Rep.Bob Latta (202) 225-6405, for those in the 5th Congressional district.
We deliver mail to every address in the country six days a week. We have been voted the most trusted federal agency for 6 years in a row. We are the center of a $1.3 trillion mailing industry that supports between 8 million and 9 million jobs. We love what we do and we love serving our customers.
We want to fulfill our obligation to the pre-funding mandate but we want to do it in a way that will preserve the Postal Service as we know it today.
We cannot do this alone and we are asking for your help by contacting your Congressmen.
More information can be found at our letter carriers national web site, www.nalc.org.
Thank you,
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