



MAIL HANDLER UPDATE

NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION

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Paul V. Hogrogian
National President

AFL-CIO EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ISSUES STATEMENT OPPOSING PRIVATIZATION:

NO POSTAL SERVICE PRIVATIZATION



Timothy M. Dwyer
Secretary-Treasurer

The U.S. Postal Service, which was created as the Post Office Department in 1792, has its founding principles in the U.S. Constitution. To this day, it remains a national treasure belonging to the people of this country.

The Postal Service has remained a self-sustaining, independent establishment of the federal government that does not receive taxpayer funding and relies solely on revenue derived from the sale of postal services and products.

The Postal Service employs more than 500,000 people who are at the center of a \$1.4 trillion, 7.5 million employee mailing industry. The agency serves the needs of more than 157 million business and residential customers through its affordable universal network, providing service six and sometimes seven days a week.

This universal network connects the country's rural, suburban and urban communities at fair and reasonable rates, providing equal access no matter who we are and where we are located. This unmatched infrastructure coupled with a dedicated workforce is the reason that the Postal Service is consistently the highest-rated agency of the federal government. In fact, a Pew Research Center poll, released in February 2018, showed that the Postal Service has an 88% favorability rating.

The Postal Service remains the nation's second-largest employer of military veterans and is a source of decent and dignified union jobs and equal pay for workers from all backgrounds, including women and people of color. These employees are dedicated public servants who do more than process and deliver the nation's mail. They serve as the eyes and ears of the nation's communities and often respond first in situations involving health, safety and crime.

While there are many unknowns when it comes to privatization of the Postal Service, we know that if it is privatized in whole or in part, the decision to provide services will be based on whether a company can make a profit rather than what's good for working people. Inevitably, privatization will lead to increased rates and diminished services for customers, especially in rural communities and potentially low-income urban areas.

Privatization of the Postal Service would jeopardize the booming e-commerce sector and cripple a major part of the nation's critical infrastructure during a time where methods of communication are constantly changing, while mail, including letters, cards, periodicals, medicines, catalogs and packages, continues to be invaluable to individuals and businesses.

Recently, the White House Office of Management and Budget unveiled a plan for privatization of the Postal Service promoted by billionaire- and corporate-funded "think tanks" with powerful influence in the Trump administration and Congress. These corporate interests are not looking out for workers, communities or businesses who are currently well-served by the Postal Service as an independent establishment of the federal government.

As a member of "A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service," the AFL-CIO will actively engage in the fight to save the Postal Service by mounting a serious defense to this threat and encouraging central labor councils and state federations to join with labor and community allies in concrete actions against privatization.

The AFL-CIO also will go on record unequivocally opposing the privatization of the Postal Service, so it remains an independent establishment of the federal government.

COMMITTEE ON THE FUTURE MEETS ON LONG-TERM ISSUES

The NPMHU's Committee on the Future was originally constituted in 1996, and for more than two decades has engaged in strategic planning over long-term issues that will confront the Union over the coming months and years. The Committee usually focuses on five key issues facing the NPMHU: privatization of the Postal Service; the NPMHU's legislative relations program; USPS automation and other technological changes; financial planning, especially at the Local level; and membership recruitment.

The most recent semi-annual meeting of the Committee, which took place during July 2018 in Buffalo, NY, continued this process. As is often the case, the Committee's focus is determined by current events, so this meeting primarily dealt with the following issues:

A significant focus of the meeting was on the need to recruit greater numbers of Mail Handler Assistants into membership in the Union. All NPMHU Local Unions and representatives need to make special efforts to sign up MHAs immediately upon their hiring, during new employee orientation, and not wait to implement recruitment efforts only upon conversion to career. At this point, the numbers of non-members amongst MHAs is more than two times the rate of such non-membership for career employees. With more than one-third of the Mail Handler bargaining unit now comprised of employees currently serving as an MHA or previously hired into the Postal Service as an MHA, if not corrected these lower numbers could have serious long-term consequences on the future of the NPMHU.

Another important topic discussed by the Committee was the recent threats coming from the Trump Administration to privatize some of the Postal Service's operations. The White House Task Force is about to issue a series of recommendations, and it is expected to follow the President's suggestion that the Postal Service eventually be privatized. Coming after years of inaction by the Congress on postal reform legislation, and during political gridlock in Washington, DC, perhaps the Task Force recommendations will spur Congressional action in the opposite direction, as a clear, bipartisan majority of the Congress continues to support the Postal Service as a cherished American institution that is necessary to the economic and social well-being of the Nation.

The Committee also discussed, as always, various automation programs that the Postal Service is beginning to develop, purchase, and deploy. Most notably, the



(l-r standing) Michael Hora- Executive Director MHBP & Assistant to NST, Lawrence Sapp- FL SEBM and Southern Region Vice President, Tim Dwyer- Ntl. Secretary-Treasurer, Pervous (Andy B.) Badilishamwalimu- Local 310 President, Nick Mosezar- Local 318 President, John (JR) Macon- Local 329 President, Woody Hendrickson- Local 332 President, Teresa Harmon- CAD Manager, David Wilkin- Local 309 President & Northeastern Region Vice President, Alex Cervantes- Local 320 President, Jeff Larsen- Local 323 President, Don Sneesby- Local 316 President & Western Region Vice President, Bob Losi- Legislative and Political Director
(l-r sitting) Nina Gallauresi- Assistant Director MHBP, June Harris- Local 306 President & Central Region Vice President, Paul Hogrogian- President NPMHU, Kelly Dickey- Local 322 President and John Gibson- Local 308 President & Eastern Region Vice President

Committee discussed recent USPS plans to use Automated Guided Vehicles (AGV), also known as driverless forklifts, in various mail processing plants around the country. Still unclear is whether these AGVs actually will lower costs, whether these AGVs will adequately or competently perform their tasks, and whether these AVGs will replace employees or simply change the tasks of the remaining employees.

Finally, the Committee engaged in lengthy discussions about how best to implement the recently signed Update MOU relating to RI-399. NPMHU representatives on the Local, Regional, and National Dispute Resolution Committees have a lot of work to do in the upcoming weeks to ensure that the full benefits of the Update MOU are experienced by Mail Handlers across the country.

\$645 COLA EFFECTIVE IN SEPTEMBER 2018

Effective Pay Period 19, September 01, 2018, career Mail Handler craft employees are scheduled to receive the fifth of seven possible cost-of-living (COLA) adjustments as outlined in Article 9.3 of the 2016 National Agreement. This COLA increase is based on the upward change in the relevant Consumer Price Index (CPI)

following release of the July 2019 Index, and provides an annual increase of \$645 for all Steps in Table 1 and for Step P of Table 2. The remaining Steps in Table 2 will receive the proportional COLA increase percentages as outlined in Article 9.3 of the National Agreement. Wage charts are available at www.npmhu.org.



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