



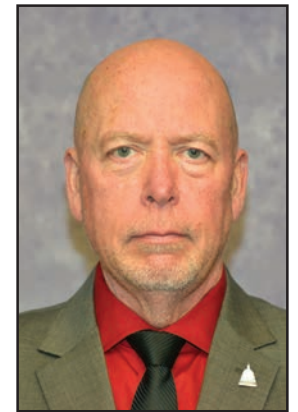
MAIL HANDLER UPDATE

NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION

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MAIL HANDLERS HOLD THEIR TENTH LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE



(l-r) VP Dave Wilkin, VP Lawrence Sapp, VP June Harris, NST(E) Kevin Tabarus, LIUNA General President Brent Booker, NPMHU President Paul Hogrogian, VP Don Sneesby and VP John Gibson.

After a four-year hiatus, the National Postal Mail Handlers Union hosted its 2023 Legislative Conference for the 118th Congress, May 2nd & 3rd. Presidents, Legislative Representatives, and policy enthusiasts from the Union's Locals gathered in Washington, DC, to discuss NPMHU's legislative priorities for the congressional session, and to learn how to effectively lobby their members of Congress in the House and Senate.

The first day of the conference included a full training program, with a host of speakers and panel discussions highlighting the issues the Postal Service and the labor movement are now facing in Congress and the needs for grassroots lobbying. National President Paul Hogrogian and Legislative & Political Director Katie Maddocks opened the program by highlighting the importance of the NPMHU's representation on Capitol Hill, noting in particular that year-round legislative and political involvement must be part of the commitment made by all NPMHU activists.

Those opening remarks were followed by a legislative panel that included Sister Maddocks, APWU Legislative Director Judy Beard, and NALC Chief of Staff Kori Blalock Keller. The primary message of the panel was the power and impact that joint efforts by the postal unions can have for all of our members. The most recent example of the power of the postal unions' collective voice was the efforts to advocate for the Postal Service Reform Act, which was passed by both the House and Senate and signed into law by President Biden over a year ago. NPMHU, its members, and postal stakeholders have been fighting for comprehensive postal reform for over a decade. Because of our dedicated work, we were able to gain approval on a bipartisan bill that repealed the 2006 mandate to prefund retiree healthcare costs; integrate Medicare coverage for future retirees; codify six-day delivery; enter agreements with state, local and tribal governments to offer services; and provide greater transparency to customers on delivery delays.

The conference then focused on looking forward and outlining the issues that we would be discussing during our visits to Congressional offices. NPMHU participants were tasked with garnering support on H.Res. 277 while on the Hill. This non-binding House Resolution expresses support for the Postal Service to revert back to 2012 standards. In 2015, the Postal Service reduced service standards, resulting in the delay of first-class mail, periodicals, and newspapers, causing the virtual elimination of overnight delivery. These delays continue to negatively impact businesses and households, effectively driving away customers from the Postal Service and leading to a decrease in revenue and the worsening of its financial situation.

Along with this postal legislation, NPMHU is advocating for bills that strengthen retirement benefits and that support the right to organize. These include the Social Security Fairness Act, H.R. 82/S. 597; the Equal COLA Act, H.R. 304; and the Protecting the Right to Organize Act, H.R. 20/S. 567. These bills will be discussed more in the upcoming *Mail Handler Magazine*.

In order for NPMHU members to effectively lobby these issues on Capitol Hill, Amy Pfeiffer, the Chief of Staff for Congressman Andy Kim (D-NJ-03), spoke on best practices for meeting with members of Congress and their staff and what they can expect. She emphasized how her office works to ensure that they hear from constituents on issues important to them and how policy developed in Washington, DC will impact them back home.

What also helps with lobbying efforts is having a good understanding of the political landscape of Washington. To help with this, International Union of Painters and Allied Trades Government Affairs Director Liz McElroy and Sister Maddocks discussed the outcome of the 2022 Midterm Elections, the changes of leadership within the House of Representatives, and how this impacts the legislative agenda for Congress and the NPMHU's efforts on Capitol Hill.

The conference also heard from many experts on the postal issues currently being debated in the nation's capital.

Anton Hajjar, the Vice Chair of the United States Postal Service Board of Governors, and Ashely Poling, Commissioner with the Postal Regulatory Commission, spoke to how their positions influence policy decisions of the Postal Service and the need for a working relationship with the Mail Handlers and other stakeholders.

We were privileged to hear from Representative Gerry Connolly (D-VA-11) and Senator Gary Peters (D-MI) who both spoke about their work to secure passage of the Postal Service Reform Act. Because of their efforts, the Postal Service is on a path of sustainability that delivers to urban, rural, and suburban communities alike. The Mail Handlers are grateful for their work in Congress and for taking the time to speak to our attendees.

American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) President Everett Kelley gave a spirited speech on the need for grassroots lobbying, the importance of getting involved with the legislative process, and the need for union representing federal and postal employees to work together.

The second day of the conference allowed all newly-trained Mail Handlers to meet with Members of Congress and their professional staff. Prior to heading up to the Hill for their scheduled appointments, newly elected LiUNA General President Brent Booker spoke to the group. Having just started his tenure, his address at our conference was his first as General President. Booker echoed General President Emeritus Terry O'Sullivan's previous messages of empowerment, citing that NPMHU's fights are LiUNA's fights, and our Laborer brother and sisters will support our legislative efforts.

Not only were NPMHU elected leaders and Mail Handlers able to share their views on pending issues throughout their day on the Hill, but relationships forged during the conference will prove helpful throughout the rest of the 118th Congress.



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