



MAIL HANDLER UPDATE

NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION

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Paul V. Hogrogian
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GET READY FOR THE NPMHU LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE



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On May 13th and 14th, leaders within the National Postal Mail Handlers Union will gather in Washington, DC, for our legislative conference. As the Union officials and the Postal Service faces existential threats, it is necessary for elected officials to hear from us. Mail Handlers will go over the NPMHU legislative agenda for the 119th Congress; how to effectively lobby their Representatives and Senators; receive updates on the current political landscape; as well as hear from elected officials.

First and foremost, NPMHU members will be discussing the rhetoric calling for the privatization of the United States Postal Service. In 2024, then President-elect Trump commented on privatizing USPS, while House Oversight and Reform Committee Chairman James Comer (R-KY-01) reflected that while it would be difficult to privatize the entirety of the Postal Service, subcontracting processing jobs — Mail Handler jobs — could be feasible. To combat these threats to jobs, NPMHU will be asking for congressional support of H. Res. 70 and S. Res. 147, both of which express that the Postal Service should remain an independent federal agency and not be subject to privatization.

Members of Congress will also want to hear about what Mail Handlers are hearing in regards to any changes to the network and how it could impact service. As many Representatives and Senators hear from their constituents on delays in mail delivery, Mail Handlers have a keen insight on the logistics of moving mail and how delays can occur. Mail Handlers can provide a much needed education on the fundamentals of the United States Postal Service.

In addition to protecting the Postal Service and Mail Handler jobs, legislative conference attendees will also lobby on the need to protect earned benefits. Recently, postal retirement and health care benefits have been targeted as a means of deficit reduction. Mail Handlers have seen recent calls to increase employee contributions in the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) to 4.4 percent; moving from a high-3 to a high-5 for retirement annuity calculations; eliminate the FERS retirement supplement for those who retire before the age of 62; move health benefits to a voucher program, instead of the current premium-shared model; and, tying retirement benefits contribution rates to whether or not a postal employee elects union representation. Members of Congress need to understand how these changes would be a direct impact to take-home pay.

Mail Handlers have an important message for elected officials, and we're looking forward to seeing you all in May.

THREATS AGAINST UNION RIGHTS INCREASE

The National Postal Mail Handlers Union has long seen the benefits of labor and organizing rights. There is a clear connection between increased wages, secure retirement benefits, and workplace safety with union membership. Mail Handlers can attest to this. However, the NPMHU saw that Project 2025 calls for eliminating public sector unions and limiting organizing rights for the private sector. While Project 2025 was just touted as nothing the Trump Administration would bring to fruition, we are seeing actions that mirror Project 2025 proposals, including rescinding the collective bargaining agreement for TSA employees; firings of members of the National Labor Relations Board and the Merit System



Protection Board without cause; and the indiscriminate termination of federal employees.

We are also seeing these attacks in the halls of Congress. Introduced legislation directly impacting Mail Handlers is the Paycheck Protection Act (H.R. 2174), as introduced by Representative Eric Burlison (R-MO-07). While the title of the legislation conveys that it will protect workers, what it actually does is prohibit postal and federal unions from collecting dues through payroll deductions. If this bill were to be signed into law it would upend the finances of the NPMHU. Payroll deductions of dues are the easiest way for Mail Handlers to pay their union dues, and ensure they remain in good standing. In a letter to the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee before they voted on approval of the bill, NPMHU National President Paul Hogrogian expressed opposition to the legislation. "The NPMHU protects workers' rights by representing them in day-to-day problems on the job, like discipline, violations of seniority, discrimination, or other management abuse, and addresses such work-place concerns as health and safety. We cannot effectively do so if our finances are undermined by limiting how we can collect dues from our members."

The Mail Handlers and other employed by the Postal Service are somewhat protected as we are not covered by the same United States Code as other federal employees who are facing additional threats to their union rights. In addition to legislation that targets our brothers and sisters in the federal workforce, the Administration issued an Executive Order (EO) on March 27 stripping about 75 percent of federal employees of their collective bargaining rights under the guise of national security. 75 percent of the federal workforce now no longer have the ability to file grievances and seek workplace protections. In response, Representatives Jared Golden (D-ME-02) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA-01) introduced the Protect America's Workforce Act (H.R. 2550) which would nullify the EO and restore collective bargaining agreements. While this legislation does not impact NPMHU directly, the actions taken by the Administration could create pathway to strip more collective bargaining rights, the NPMHU also endorsed H.R. 2550. In this time of uncertainty, it is imperative to show solidarity with our brothers and sisters.



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