



NALC Fact Sheet

Department of Legislative and Political Affairs — National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO
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Oppose postal privatization (H.Res. 70)

Nearly 376 million pieces of mail and packages are delivered to more than 168.6 million addresses at least six days a week by the U.S. Postal Service. USPS's universal service obligation allows communities large and small to benefit from the same level of service, regardless of location, wealth, or what is being delivered. It also allows USPS to partner with private shippers, which would be unable or unwilling to service much of the country.

With founding principles in the U.S. Constitution, the nation's post office will celebrate its 250th anniversary later this year. USPS is a self-sustaining, independent establishment of the federal government, does not receive taxpayer funding, and relies on revenue derived from the sale of postal services and products. Despite popular news coverage of a USPS financial crisis, 80 percent of its losses are due to factors outside its control and can be addressed by allowing USPS to continue with its current network modernization plans and by focusing on other legislative remedies that will ensure the Postal Service continues to provide its important public service far into the future.

Postal privatization imperils far more than its supporters reveal. It is not the answer to the USPS's financial crisis and would not benefit the American public.

The Postal Service is the core of the U.S. mailing industry

With 640,000 employees, USPS is at the center of the \$1.92 trillion mailing industry that employs more than 7.9 million Americans (5 percent of all jobs nationwide).

USPS's universal network plays a crucial role in the function of private shippers such as FedEx and Amazon, which partner with USPS because it provides unique last-mile delivery to every business and residential customer in the country six and, increasingly, seven days a week. This reliable, efficient service is too costly for private shippers to maintain alone, particularly for rural customers.

The Postal Service is a lifeline

USPS's massive infrastructure guarantees that no matter where you are in the country—urban, suburban or rural—USPS will deliver to you. Every day, millions of Americans rely on this vast system for the delivery of prescription drugs, Social Security and pension checks, and essential goods.

In times of national crisis, USPS's infrastructure also provides a ready and robust means of communication and distribution. Most recently, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Postal Service delivered critical health advisories, rapid tests and stimulus checks, and played a pivotal role in the safe and efficient operation of two national elections.

The Postal Service is secure

Mail and packages carried by USPS are protected by more than 200 federal laws enforced by the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. Founded by Benjamin Franklin and established on Aug. 7, 1775, the Inspection Service is one of the nation's oldest federal law enforcement agencies.

The agency targets theft, disrupts drug traffickers, prevents crimes, uncovers fraud and scams, and keeps customers, employees and mail safe. The Inspection Service does this with approximately 2,400 employees, including 1,300 postal inspectors and 500 uniformed postal police officers all working to ensure America's confidence in the U.S. Mail.

The Postal Service is much more than a delivery service

USPS letter carriers provide far more than the delivery of mail and packages. They are members of the community, the eyes and ears of their neighborhoods, and often the only source of daily contact for the elderly and disabled. They often serve as first responders for lost children and the victims of crimes, accidents and fires. They provide the first sense of normalcy after hurricanes, floods, and other natural disasters.

The Postal Service is also one of the nation's largest employers of U.S. military veterans and remains the most popular government entity in the United States, consistently ranked as one of the most trusted federal agencies by the American people.

International impacts of privatization harm the public

International postal privatization and profit maximization efforts have resulted in disinvestment, lower service quality, and higher prices (despite more competition), as well as drastic cuts to both employment and wages across the entire delivery industry.

Privately owned post offices only operate in areas deemed lucrative, resulting in large sections of unserved rural, sub-urban, and even low-income urban areas. For example, the privatization of the Italian, Danish, Norwegian and Finnish postal systems has led to slower delivery times, reductions in the frequency of delivery to as few as three days a week, and, in some cases, the discontinuation of delivery to rural residents. These service reductions would be foolish when more and more people rely on delivery for purchased goods and the frequency of delivery is increasing in the United States.

Stamp prices have increased significantly in countries with privatized postal systems. For example, since 2010, stamp prices have more than doubled in Italy and more than tripled in the UK, while the price of a stamp has only increased 66 percent in the United States. In fact, according to an analysis by the USPS OIG, USPS stamp prices are the most affordable in the world, when compared to 30 other countries with postal systems relatively comparable to the USPS.

Privatizing the Postal Service would have far-reaching negative consequences nationwide, including:

- Jeopardizing the jobs of 640,000 postal employees, more than 73,000 of whom are military veterans, and affecting the 7.9 million Americans in the mailing industry.
- Endangering the security of the nation's mail system, threatening the safe delivery of prescription drugs, money and election mail.
- Slashing service quality and hiking prices beyond affordability.
- Potentially ceasing delivery for America's rural and low-income communities, negatively affecting nearly all 50 states in some form, but especially large, less-populous regions.

NALC opposes postal privatization in all forms and supports H.Res. 70, which calls on Congress to ensure that the Postal Service remains an independent establishment and not subject to privatization.

Sponsored by Reps. Stephen Lynch (D-MA) and Nick LaLota (R-NY)