America tells Congress: U.S. Mail is not for sale

"There's no place like the Postal Service," US Postal Service employee Debra Pelletier, of Union Park, Ill., told senators on Capitol Hill on Tuesday, June 14, 2013. "This is not about the letter carriers. It’s about the American people." Pelletier was one of about 1,200 postal workers who rallied outside the Dirksen Senate Office Building to urge lawmakers to reject a bill that would allow the Postal Service to privatize and close post offices. The rally was one of many held around the country, as postal workers grappled with the possibility of having to pay for retiree health care costs and cut services to make up for a projected billion-dollar deficit.

"They've tried every other way possible to deal with the deficit, but this is the last straw," said Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., in a statement about the bill. "If this bill becomes law, it will mean the end of the Postal Service, and the end of a service that millions of Americans depend on for their mail.

The proposal to privatize and close post offices was one of many discussed during the rally. Other proposals include selling off the Postal Service, allowing the government to sell off its annuity and health care systems, and increasing the price of stamps. The rally also drew attention to the possibility of closing post offices and reducing service hours.

"We are fighting back, and we are not going to give up," said Pelletier. "We are going to do everything we can to make sure that our voices are heard."