



NALC FACT SHEET

Department of Government and Political Affairs — National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO

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Door delivery

Six days a week (and sometimes seven), nearly 40 million residential and business customers throughout the country receive packages, letters, bills, medications, supplies and more through door delivery service, where a letter carrier delivers the item straight to a customer's door. This is part of a unique universal delivery network that's attractive to businesses, evidenced by the fact that the Postal Service is actually operationally profitable.

Customer preference for door delivery service: A recent change in postal regulations allows for current door deliveries to be converted to cluster boxes, subject to customer approval. But according to the Government Accountability Office, cluster boxes are so unpopular compared with door delivery that, in 2014, less than 0.8 percent of business door-delivery customers opted to go to cluster-box delivery; for residence, just 0.1 percent. How would USPS customers react if they were forced to convert to cluster-box delivery?

- In some locations, USPS has been soliciting customers to convert to a cluster box that could be placed anywhere—a sidewalk or a location at the end of the street—meaning customers would have to retrieve mail from a cluster box. But postal regulations make it very clear: Customers and property owners have the right to retain their existing mode of mail delivery.

Level of service important to maintaining USPS revenue: Adjustments in levels of service can have an immediate impact on current-year revenue and a long-term impact on the viability of a business. If the level of the Postal Service service is cut, customers would likely respond by reducing their use of it. Reduced use would cause a drop in revenue. A significant enough drop in revenue due to service cuts would actually cause the USPS to lose more money than such service cuts would save.

- Service cuts should never be made to a system that works. Cutting services is considered a high-risk, high-stakes move. By the time USPS realized that the service cut was not worth the revenue decline, it might be impossible to regain all the revenue that had been lost by restoring the service. Some customers would likely move on from using the USPS permanently; others would move to use it less.

Opportunity to generate revenue through Customer Connect: Letter carriers make personal contact with millions of Postal Service customers daily, a resource any company would love to have. To take better advantage of this role, the NALC and the Postal Service created a program in 2003 called **Customer Connect**.

- Letter carriers use Customer Connect to encourage commercial customers to ship using the Postal Service rather than with a private delivery service. At the same time, letter carriers interact

with business owners, creating relationships as well as revenue opportunities.

- By the end of Fiscal Year 2014, nearly \$2 billion had been generated over the life of Customer Connect. Ending door-to-door delivery not only would severely threaten the high level of service letter carriers provide, it also would take away an important competitive advantage from USPS. To eliminate this vital door delivery service that has generated significant profits would make no sense.

The eyes and ears of the community: Letter carriers are often first on the scene in situations that threaten the safety and security of the communities they serve.

- As one of the few—and some days only—point of human contact for home-bound patrons, letter carriers are particularly attuned to signs of an accident or illness. In 1982, NALC and USPS created **Carrier Alert**, a cooperative and voluntary community service program to monitor the well-being of elderly and disabled mail patrons.
- The very nature of letter carriers' jobs puts them in constant contact with the public. As a result, countless letter carriers are often the first to arrive at the scene of a crisis, or perhaps they are the first to recognize some sort of problem within their neighborhoods. NALC publishes stories about letter carrier heroism in its monthly membership magazine, *The Postal Record*, and each fall the organization pays public tribute to outstanding examples of letter carrier selflessness with an annual **Heroes of the Year** awards ceremony.
- The **Cities' Readiness Initiative** is a program that is expressly designed to take advantage of the Postal Service's universal network, relying on the voluntary participation of letter carriers to help protect Americans in the event of a biological incident, such as a terrorist attack. The program, which has been tested in several cities across America, involves letter carriers being trained to deliver medicines to residents in the aftermath of a biological event.

Millions of households across the country would be negatively affected by losing door-delivery service to cluster boxes. Customers would be required to walk inconvenient distances to get to these centralized neighborhood delivery locations to retrieve their mail and packages. The elderly and sick would have to walk these distances in sometimes harsh weather to collect their mail and retrieve crucial deliveries of medicine and other packages. Creating a burden such as this would be a disservice to all Americans. The U.S. Postal Service should not be drifting away from its universal service obligations at a time when the e-commerce boom is resulting in customers expecting increased deliveries with increased frequency.

NALC supports H.Res. 28, which protects door delivery for all business and residential customers.