



The more things change, the more they stay the same

On October 25, Postmaster General Jack Potter announced that he would retire this month. It's been nine years since Potter became postmaster general, making him the longest-serving PMG since the 1820s. Deputy Postmaster Pat Donahoe will replace Potter at the helm of the Postal Service.

On November 2, the midterm elections were held. And when the 112th Congress is sworn in on January 3, the makeup of the Senate and the House will also be different.

Although the postmaster general has changed and Congress has changed, our issues have not. Nor have the facts surrounding the NALC's efforts to get the Postal Service back on solid financial ground.

The fact remains that a recent report from the Postal Regulatory Commission confirms what the NALC has maintained all along—that the future of the Postal Service's financial future lies in relieving the onerous requirement to fully fund its future retiree health benefit fund within a 10-year time frame by paying \$5.5 billion a year.

The fact remains that another report from the PRC shows that the Postal Service was overcharged more than \$50 billion in payments to the Civil Service Retirement System over the last 40 years.

The NALC has been lobbying Congress to address both of these important legislative issues. The pre-funding liability was a result of the 2006 Postal Reform Act and can be stopped only by additional legislative action. In addition, Congress must direct the Office of Personnel Management through legislation to re-calculate the CSRS payments using the correct formula.

Hopefully by the time you read this, Congress will have listened to what the PRC has been saying and will have adopted legislation during the "lame duck" session that would allow the USPS to pre-fund its future retiree health benefit costs with the massive postal surplus in the Civil Service Retirement System. If not, then we need to push the new Congress to introduce legislation to do just that.

Another fact that remains is that cutting a day of deliv-

ery is not the answer to the Postal Service's financial problems. We should be looking for ways to build up the Postal Service, not tear it down piece by piece. We need to build upon our last-mile delivery network—the best and most trusted for six straight years—and explore new products and services for our customers that will ensure the financial future of the Postal Service.

Hopefully, the new Congress will understand that these are not partisan issues or political in nature, but are essential for the preservation of the Postal Service that Americans deserve.

It was a privilege to be able to work side by side with the more than 150 letter carriers released to work this election cycle. I know that they put in many, many hours in our effort to get candidates elected who support the interests of letter carriers. Thank you for all that you did.

“Although the postmaster general has changed and Congress has changed, our issues have not.”

I would be remiss if I didn't mention the upcoming departure of two fellow resident national officers, Executive Vice President Gary Mullins and Director of City Delivery Dale Hart. From the moment I arrived in Washington, both Gary and Dale offered their guidance and their friendship. For that, I want to sincerely thank them.

They have both been tremendous leaders in this union with unmistakable personalities. For that, we should all thank them. At the end of the day, I will miss them both dearly. I wish them both a long, happy, healthy retirement.

And to my national business agent, Mike Weir, who is also retiring this December, I want to say: Thanks for raising your hand. May you also have a wonderful retirement. By the way, I've heard cats make great audiences—but still try to keep it short.

In closing, I want to wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season. ✉