



A letter to postal patrons

Dear Postal Patron:

By now, you surely have heard that the United States Postal Service is facing severe financial difficulties. A change in the law in 2006 placed a burden on USPS to pre-fund the cost of retiree benefits over the next 75 years in just 10 years' time. That mandate can be changed by Congress without a taxpayer bailout. You can expect to see this issue widely discussed in the near future.

I'm writing to you today, though, for a different reason. While you would expect the agency to display frugality during this time, USPS officials continue to demonstrate a patronizing attitude toward the public. Here are some examples:

One such scenario comes directly from USPS Headquarters at L'Enfant Plaza in Washington, DC. The USPS is going to experiment in 21 offices by separating a delivery unit's office casing and street duties. In other words, they plan to create full-time jobs to sort and prepare mail in the office and full-time jobs for street delivery.

The thousands of patrons living in those ZIP codes will see disruptions and irregular schedules during the "test" period. The patrons, like you, have not been consulted about the pending experimental changes to their mail delivery, nor has your senator or representative. Instead, a group of unelected postal officials working at USPS Headquarters unilaterally has decided to test its hypothesis on your very real checks, bills, prescriptions by mail and parcels. Other tests performed by the USPS have resulted in delivery as late as 10 p.m., or not at all.

Due to these pending experimental changes, the following localities can look forward to some disruptions of regular mail delivery: Philadelphia; northern Ohio; central Illinois; Boston; Middletown, CT; northern NJ; Brooklyn, NY; Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco and Santa Ana, CA; and Lakewood and Denver, CO.

Another big-ticket item involves the continued and deliberate violations of our collective-bargaining agreement. All across the country, postal managers knowingly violate the contract when they bypass volunteers to work overtime and instead require "non-volunteers" to work the overtime.

This affects the people's Postal Service because the

same perpetrators of these violations settle the related grievances and pay employees for hours of pay—without any additional work in return. This occurs because the offending managers "make the numbers" when they violate the contract, but the grievance remedy pay after the fact is not accounted for. Some of these managers even achieve personal gain in the form of a USPS-paid bonus following their successful Enron-style tricks.

Former Postmaster General Marvin Runyon is credited with saying of the USPS workforce: "If you don't touch the mail, then you're unnecessary overhead." Send this message to your elected officials: Save six-day delivery of mail—lose the bureaucrats.

Accountability within Customer Connect

The following two provisions of M-01742 need to be policed by NALC station Customer Connect coordinators, shop stewards and branch leaders:

- **Quarterly district telecons**—The parties have agreed to conduct quarterly district teleconferences and to ensure that all concerned parties are aware of the time and date of these teleconferences. To assist with this, national business agents now have the ability to post the details of the scheduled teleconferences at nalc.org/depart/cau/custconn/index.html.
- **Biweekly station Customer Connect program talks**—These bi-weekly talks are to be tracked. Failure to conduct and track the talks should be addressed promptly by NALC officials, including utilization of the grievance procedure if necessary. ☒

Merry Christmas!
Happy Hanukkah!
Happy New Year!

