



## Not-so-sweet 16

**know what you're thinking. This is going to be an article** about how my bracket blew up or how my alma mater, Kansas, came close to winning the national men's college basketball title. But, you would be wrong. It is, however, about madness.

In the last two issues of *The Postal Record*, the featured stories covered the makeup of Congress, the pivotal players in the fight for meaningful postal reform and a roadmap of how postal reform will have to work its way through both the Senate and the House.

As the articles outlined, it is the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform that handles Postal Service issues in the House. The chairman of that committee has the authority to decide what bills come up for a vote in committee and when they can move on to the entire House for consideration. The chairman of the committee is Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA).

But what you may not know is that not only does Rep. Issa get to decide what bills come up for a vote in committee, he also gets to decide what the committee holds hearings on. He gets to control the topic of conversation.

**So guess what has been one of Issa's favorite topics? If** you said anti-union hearings, you would be correct. As of the writing of this article, he's held 16 of them.

This fact was pointed out by Rep. Stephen Lynch (D-MA) during one of Issa's anti-union hearings held in February. Rep. Lynch also sits on the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

Said Lynch: "This committee has really tilted toward going after union employees. This has not been an even-handed process." He later added, "I don't honestly believe that the employers, the corporations are going to be brought in here. We've had 16 hearings on employees and busting unions, but don't hold your breath to see Goldman Sachs come through that door."

At the end of Lynch's remarks, Issa responded by saying (wait for it...you know I can't make this stuff up) that he did bring in an employer. He brought in Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker. (Of course, Issa brought in Walker for a hearing to talk about his "budget" legislation that

stripped most of the state's workers of their collective-bargaining rights.)

And let's not forget that 228 of the 435 members of the House have signed on as co-sponsors to H.R. 1351, a bill that addresses the Postal Service surpluses in both the Federal Employees Retirement System and the Civil Service Retirement System. Or that 219 of the 435 members of the House have signed on to H. Res. 137, which backs maintaining six-day delivery. Despite a majority of the House supporting these measures, Rep. Issa refuses to allow H.R. 1351 to come up for a vote. Nor has he crafted language to preserve six-day delivery. In fact, he has drafted language to eliminate it.

**NALC is committed to working with members of Congress** to pass meaningful postal reform. But to date, it has not been an easy road. We need members of Congress to step up and treat postal reform as an issue that deserves a solution. What we don't need are members of Congress who use the issue as a means for pushing a political, anti-union, anti-worker agenda.

What we also don't need is a committee chairman who uses his position to push forward ideals that practically no one else in the House supports. (Issa's legislation to dismantle the Postal Service has exactly one co-sponsor.) It's time to change the conversation and the direction of this committee.

In this November's election, voters will determine the makeup of the House of Representatives. In turn, that makeup will determine who will be chairwoman of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. If nothing changes, be prepared for the possibility of another two years with Issa in control.

This is why every election matters. It's time for someone other than Issa to control the topic of conversation in these hearings. It's time to push forward legislation that would help address the Postal Service's true financial problems, not take the nation's only universal delivery network apart piece by piece.

We must work together this fall to elect members of Congress who support us. Let's help stop the madness. ☒