

Communities and Postal Workers United (CPWU)

Spring, 2015 -- *No Closures! No Cuts! No Delay of the Mail!* - www.cpwunited.com

"Writing to Congress is not enough," said Mark Dimondstein, shortly after being sworn in as president of the APWU, over a year ago. ***"Lobbying is not enough. History shows that only movements move Congress. We in labor must build a grand alliance with low-wage workers, retirees, civil rights organizations, women's groups, rural communities, Occupy, veterans, family farmers, faith leaders, seniors, small business and other allies to restore the primacy of the public good--including the right to a vibrant, expanding public postal service."***

In mid-February, more than 60 national people's groups joined with APWU to launch a remarkable grassroots campaign: "[A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service](http://www.agrandalliance.org)." It includes the AFL-CIO, National Council of Churches, Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Consumer Action, Greenpeace, Healthcare-NOW!, Jobs with Justice, National Education Association, Public Citizen, and National Farmers Union, among many others.

The Grand Alliance is intended to build a broad and deep network of postal supporters, on a regional and local as well as national level. Readers should share the Mission Statement (below) with your local neighborhood association, church, veterans group, or city council and ask them to join. Individuals can sign up as well as groups. The process is simple...go to the website (www.agrandalliance.org) and sign up. While the Grand Alliance demands no financial commitments, supporters will be asked to participate in various activities to help save the postal service.

A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service

www.agrandalliance.org

Mission Statement

The United States Postal Service is a wonderful national treasure, enshrined in the Constitution and supported by the American people. Without any taxpayer funding, the USPS serves 150 million households and businesses each day, providing affordable, universal mail service to all – including rich and poor, rural and urban, without regard to age, nationality, race or gender.

The U.S. Postal Service belongs to "We, the People." But the USPS and postal jobs are threatened by narrow monied interests aimed at undermining postal services and dismantling this great public institution.

Even some postal executives have been complicit in the drive toward the destruction of the Postal Service and ultimate privatization: They have slowed mail service, closed community based Post Offices and mail processing facilities, slashed hours of operations, tried ceaselessly to end six-day service as well as door to door delivery, and eliminated hundreds of thousands of living wage jobs.



As part of the APWU Contract Campaign, members of the Oakland (CA) local wear headbands that say "Standing Up! Fighting Back!"

Good postal jobs are vital to strong, healthy communities, and have provided equal opportunities and the foundation for financial stability for workers from all walks of life, including racial and ethnic minorities, women and veterans. Postal services are essential to commerce and bind together families, friends and loved ones. In the day of e-commerce, a public postal service is as relevant as ever.

Yet those corporate forces who want to privatize public services allege that curtailing postal services and eliminating jobs are necessary due to diminishing mail volume and "burdensome" union wages and benefits. Nothing could be further from the truth.

In reality, a Congressionally-manufactured USPS "crisis" imposed an unfair crushing financial mandate on the Postal Service that no other government agency or private company is forced to bear. (The Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006 compels the USPS to pay approximately \$5.5 billion per year to fund future retiree healthcare costs 75 years in advance.) Without this unreasonable burden, the USPS would have enjoyed an operating surplus of \$600 million in 2013 and over \$1.4 Billion in 2014.

The people of this country deserve great public postal services. We advocate expanded services, such as non-profit postal banking and other financial services. We call on the Postmaster General and Postal Board of Governors to strengthen and champion the institution.

The public good must not be sacrificed for the sake of private investment and profit. A strong public Postal Service is our democratic right. Join us in the fight to protect and enhance vibrant public postal services now – and for many generations to come.

Ask your Representative:
Co-sponsor HR 784 & H.Res 54 for recovery of delivery standards, H.Res. 28, which supports retaining door delivery for businesses and residents, and H.Res. 12 which backs 6-day delivery.





Danny Glover: Our Postal Service

The postal service has a special place in the heart of Danny Glover, the beloved actor, activist, and humanitarian: His parents were postal workers, and their good middle-income jobs enabled them to buy their first home. As a teenager, Danny himself even worked at the post office during the Christmas-time crunch. See the two minute video (and share!) at www.agrandalliance.org

Staples!

Resolution by Philadelphia City Council

Whereas: The United States Postal Service (USPS) has entered into a no-bid deal with Staples to operate postal counters in 82 Staples stores and to provide nearly all the services the USPS provides; and

Whereas: The USPS and Staples plan to expand the program to Staples' 1,500 U.S. stores; and

Whereas, The USPS and Staples have been unwilling to staff Staples' postal units with unionized USPS employees who have the training and experience to properly handle U.S. mail, who have sworn an oath to uphold the highest standards of public service, and who are accountable to the American people; and

Whereas, Low-wage, non-union "postal" jobs at Staples could ultimately replace the living-wage, union jobs of USPS employees, with Staples stores completely replacing US Post Offices; and

Whereas, Privatizing the handling of US Mail risks jeopardizing the sanctity and security of the mail; and

Whereas, Postal workers have been resisting this plan to privatize the USPS, replace their living-wage jobs with low-wage jobs, and potentially degrade service; and

Whereas, the Council of the City of Philadelphia cares about protecting high-quality public services, protecting living-wage jobs, and maintaining universal, affordable mail service for the American people; now, therefore, be it

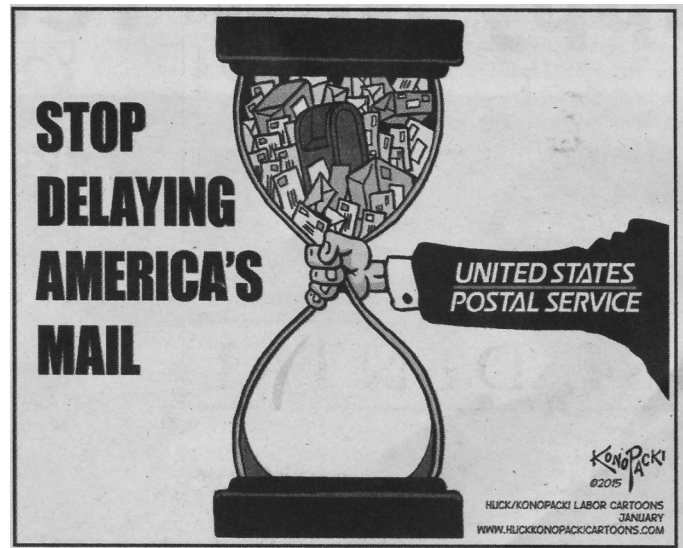
Resolved, That Council of the City of Philadelphia supports the American Postal Workers Union in its efforts to protect living-wage jobs and its insistence on the highest possible standards of customer services, opposes efforts to privatize postal operations, and calls upon Philadelphians to consider this issue when decided whether to patronize Staples....

Postal Banking!

(Excerpted from *The Hightower Lowdown*, March 2015)

"Millions of Americans in low-income neighborhoods and rural areas now have no alternative to the Wall Street-backed predatory lenders and check cashing chains that rip them off. In a January report titled "Underbanked and Overcharged," United for a Fair Economy (UFE) documented that this is a huge market of 68 million adults--more than a fourth of US households. UFE's report confirms the findings of another study done a year earlier by no less an authority than the US Postal Service's own Inspector General. It found that the average underserved household is spending some \$2,400 a year (nearly 10 percent of their income) on the outlandish fees and usurious interest rates charged by predatory financial stores.

"Both the Inspector General and UFE pointed to the obvious solution: **Postal banks**. A third of America's zip codes have no bank--but all of them have a post office. With 31,000 post offices, USPS is by far the largest retail presence in the country, so the national infrastructure is already there to offer savings accounts, reloadable pre-paid debit cards, access to e-commerce, small loans, and other banking needs at an affordable price. Plus, the postal network is trusted, accessible, and secure, making it one of the few national retail entities that



Delay of the Mail !

The USPS is delaying mail, all across the country. Overnight first class mail in the same town was virtually eliminated on January 5th. Pharmaceuticals, bills, checks, cards, letters, periodicals, parcels and supplies are being delayed by days.

All this is in anticipation of the closure ("consolidation") of eighty-two mail plants during 2015, in thirty-seven states.

What can we do? Urge your Congressional Representative to sponsor HR 784 which would restore service standards and prevent plant closures.

Urge your Senators to meet face-to-face with the new Postmaster General to demand the recovery of reliable, accessible, efficient service.

And urge anyone who has experienced mail delays to **file a complaint with the Postal Regulatory Commission** - www.prc.gov/contact (under "message" go to "complaint"). Also go to the **Office of the Inspector General** - www.uspsog.gov/comment/21614 - to comment on the "network consolidation"

has a positive reputation in these communities.

"Expanding into banking makes sense for USPS--in fact, until the banker lobby got Congress to kill the business in 1967, post offices had been offering savings deposit accounts for more than half a century. Even today, the Postal Service provides international money transfers and sells more money orders than any other entity. And postal systems around the world (in Japan, New Zealand, France, Brazil, India, and China, for instance) run very successful postal banks.

"Postal banking would help decentralize money, meet a real need, save billions of dollars for America's struggling families, and enhance and extend the agency's historic mission of public service. Oh, one more reason to do it: The Inspector General estimates that postal banking can bring nearly \$9 billion a year in revenue for the USPS.

"The post office is not merely a thing, though it is composed of many things--buildings, touch-screen postage machines, delivery trucks, mail boxes, etc. The post office is also an idea, an important concept and a mechanism for making real our people's Big Ideal of a democratic, egalitarian, one-out-of-many society.

"It's this idealism, this inherently public nature of the postal service, that is the heart of its appeal and its significance--and it is the only thing that will save the service from being shrunk to just another corporate profit center by Congress and top USPS officials."

Keep up on the latest fightback!

www.cpwunited.com

www.savethepostoffice.com

www.apwu.org

www.nalc.org

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www.nrlca.org