

# Communities and Postal Workers United (CPWU)

FALL 2020 -- *No Closures! No Cuts! No Delay of the Mail!* - [www.cpwunited.com](http://www.cpwunited.com)

## OUTCRY HALTS NEW POSTMASTER GENERAL'S ATTACKS ON SERVICE...FOR NOW

*excerpted from an article in October, 2020 Labor Notes by David Yao*  
[Unless he's ousted, the Postmaster General will resume his attacks after the November election takes the spotlight off of postal delays.]

"As a postal worker I've seen firsthand how new Postmaster General Louis DeJoy has changed mail delivery in his first months on the job, all in the name of "efficiency." ...

DeJoy's cost-cutting initiatives in July began with the order that all trucks must leave on time...

"On time" sounds reasonable, right? But in the real world, sometimes the mail isn't ready to go at the scheduled time—a batch is still being sorted, or hasn't been loaded onto the truck yet. DeJoy's order, enforced by letters of warning on violators who dared hold up a truck, meant mail was left behind. Some trucks even departed empty.

### MAIL LEFT BEHIND

Hundreds of mail sorting machines across the country were dismantled and shipped out, mostly to be scrapped. The reduced capacity has delayed mail and stretched out workdays. Operators at the Seattle processing plant have been working over 50 hours a week since some machines were removed. They used to process all the mail, every night; now mail is left unworked for the following day.

Another directive, which DeJoy later denied responsibility for, was a ban on overtime. With many offices short-staffed, no overtime would mean all the mail could not be delivered, and it would back up—which is exactly what happened in places where the ban was enforced...

### 'DUMP DEJOY' CATCHES ON

Meanwhile, postal unions have been urging their members to lobby Congress for pandemic funding for the Postal Service; \$25 billion in such aid was reportedly removed from the first stimulus bill at the behest of the White House. In June a call by the Postal Workers (APWU) to rally for postal stimulus money was answered in 20 cities...

DeJoy has been a major donor and fundraiser to Trump and the Republican Party; he was selected by a Board of Governors entirely appointed by Trump. So when Trump attacked voting by mail and questioned the ability of the Postal Service to deliver ballots, DeJoy's disruptive moves set off a firestorm...

### LARGEST-EVER DISPLAY

In August, 800 rallies were organized by MoveOn.org and allies to "save the post office from Donald Trump and declare that Postmaster General Louis DeJoy must resign." Days later, 300 more actions, organized by the APWU, Action Network, and other groups, urged Congress to supply the \$25 billion and permanently reverse DeJoy's mail-delaying policies...

It was undoubtedly the largest-ever display of public support for the nation's Postal Service...

And after state attorneys general announced a lawsuit against the Trump administration over concern with election interference, and both the House and Senate grilled DeJoy over his actions, he announced a freeze on some of his moves—at least until after the November election.

Last week a federal judge granted an immediate injunction to allow trucks to hold their departures until the mail is ready to go. USPS indicated it would comply...Even some of the removed sorting machines have begun to reappear.

### PRIVATIZATION THREAT

DeJoy's woes have continued to mount—first with a bill for back taxes for improper deductions, which he of course blames on his accountant, and now over alleged illegal campaign contributions, for which we can expect a congressional investigation...

A modest amount of postal pandemic funding has only been discussed... and may not pass this year. The Postal Service is still in jeopardy. Without the emergency funding, the forecast is insolvency in 2021.

A Trump victory in November would supercharge efforts to privatize the



### "Save the Post Office from Trump" in Portland, OR, August 22nd

postal service as well as attacks on union contracts and union power. But a victory by Biden—a corporate Democrat—is no guarantee of protection.

A congressional mandate enacted under President Nixon in 1970 requires the Postal Service to break even over the long term. Yet this makes no allowance for its role as a basic part of the nation's infrastructure... We have a Universal Service Obligation to deliver to all communities, rich or poor, rural or urban, even if an individual post office is not "profitable." ...

The threats to the Postal Service are expected to resume after the election... Cuts in retail hours, including closing during the lunch hour, had been announced in several states but then hastily withdrawn.

We can expect these and other service reductions to resume under our "efficiency"-touting boss from the private sector—followed by job cuts, of course. Fortunately, we now have an aroused set of allies."

David Yao is a full-time lead clerk and the vice president of the Seattle local of the American Postal Workers Union. Follow postal workers organizing to save the Postal Service, and find out how you can push the Board of Governors to dump DeJoy, on the Facebook page Save Our Postal Service.

## TARGET THE POSTAL BOARD OF GOVERNORS ! DUMP PMG DEJOY!

The people who can get rid of Postmaster General Louis DeJoy are the six wealthy business men who make up the Postal Board of Governors. Technically they hired him. Certainly they can fire him.

Why would they? They are all Trump appointees, though two are Democrats. But they have investigative journalists looking into their business practices and campaign donations, and the public loudly insisting they rein in or dump DeJoy.

They are feeling the heat. We can turn it up. Below is their contact information. If you call or email them, please maintain a civil tone, no threats, cursing, accusations, but insist that they do something to pull the Post Office back from the brink, starting with getting rid of DeJoy.

Postal union members and other activists have already held protests at the homes of Duncan and Barger.

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**William Zollers**  
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**KEEP UP ON THE LATEST FIGHTBACK!**

[CPWUNITED.COM](http://CPWUNITED.COM)

[AGRANDALLIANCE.ORG](http://AGRANDALLIANCE.ORG)

[APWU.ORG](http://APWU.ORG)

[NALC.ORG](http://NALC.ORG)

[NPMHU.ORG](http://NPMHU.ORG)

[NRLCA.ORG](http://NRLCA.ORG)

# POSTAL SERVICE WORKERS QUIETLY RESIST DEJOY'S CHANGES...

*[Many USPS employees see recent cost-cutting changes that have slowed mail delivery as violating the spirit, if not the letter, of the law]*

*excerpted from Washington Post, September 29*

"This summer, as controversial new procedures at the U.S. Postal Service snarled the nation's mail delivery and stirred fears of how the agency would handle the election, rank-and-file workers quietly began to resist.

Mechanics in New York drew out the dismantling and removal of mail-sorting machines until their supervisor gave up on the order. In Michigan, a group of letter carriers did an end run around a supervisor's directive to leave election mail behind, starting their routes late to sift through it. In Ohio, postal clerks culled prescriptions and benefit checks from bins of stalled mail to make sure they were delivered, while some carriers ran late items out on their own time. In Pennsylvania, some postal workers looked for any excuse — a missed turn, heavy traffic, a rowdy dog — to buy enough time to finish their daily rounds.

"I can't see any postal worker not bending those rules," one Philadelphia staffer said in an interview...

DeJoy's approach marks a fundamental shift, experts say, modeling the agency as more business enterprise than government service...

In interviews, 15 Postal Service workers and local union leaders in eight states described a deep decline in morale since DeJoy made clear his intent to make changes — with little input from the heavily unionized workforce — that have fixed intense public and congressional scrutiny on the agency. They also say they are prepared to defy directives that would limit how they do their jobs...

## **'EVERY PIECE, EVERY DAY'**

New postal workers are introduced to the agency's unofficial motto within their first days on the job: "Every piece, every day." It's referenced so frequently that "EPED" is shorthand to work faster, or longer, when mail piles up. Any conscious effort to delay mail is, under federal law, punishable by fine and as much as five years of imprisonment.

Many postal workers see the changes that slowed mail as violating the spirit, if not the letter, of that law.

They view themselves as couriers of prescription medications, paychecks, bills and more, and also as neighbors to the people on their routes, checking in on elderly residents and delivering life's necessities. The coronavirus pandemic has only magnified that sense of responsibility, they say...

***Editors note: Conditions in the postal service are changing rapidly, from day to day, as the Covid-19 pandemic surges across the nation. As of this writing, October 3rd, close to 80,000 postal workers have been off work due to contracting the virus, being in quarantine, or having to care for a family member for Covid-related reasons. At least eighty-five postal workers have died from Covid-19. New York City, initially the epicenter of the pandemic in the United States, had some postal facilities with three-quarters of their workers home sick or quarantined. Now the epicenter is shifting to the South & Southwest, as well as the Midwest. For more info and the latest about postal worker safety and rights, go to [apwu.org/coronavirus](http://apwu.org/coronavirus), [nalc.org/news/covid-19](http://nalc.org/news/covid-19) and the facebook page "Postal Workers Covid-19 Response".***

***ASK YOUR CONGRESS PERSONS TO support S 4174, the Postal Service Emergency Assistance Act, HR 6800, the HEROES Act, and HR 6425, the Protect Our Post Offices Act, to inject \$25 Billion into the postal budget and forgive the debt.***

## POSTMASTER GENERAL EYES AGGRESSIVE CHANGES AT POSTAL SERVICE AFTER ELECTION

*[Louis DeJoy is said to be looking at policies that could lead to slower delivery in parts of the country — and higher prices]*

*excerpted from Washington Post, August 20*

"...The plans under consideration, described by four people familiar with Postal Service discussions, would come after the election and touch on all corners of the agency's work. They include raising package rates, particularly when delivering the last mile on behalf of big retailers; setting higher prices for service in Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico; curbing discounts for nonprofits; requiring election ballots to use first-class postage; and leasing space in Postal Service facilities to other government agencies and companies.

The plans do not include any infrastructure spending, something Democrats have clamored for as consumer habits change during the pandemic and private-sector competitors use the new demand to build out their distribution networks. The Postal Service is in need of new trucks, equipped to carry more packages than paper mail, experts say, and new machines that can process packages.

It is unclear which of the ideas DeJoy can enact unilaterally and which require the review of the Postal Regulatory Commission, USPS's governing board and Congress. Operational changes — strictly how the agency handles mail items — fall under the postmaster general's purview, though Congress can impose a statutory requirement. Changes to "standards," or price points for delivery products, require review by the regulatory commission.

Policymakers and previous postal officials have discussed some of the proposals for years, but DeJoy's ideas go further, the people familiar with the plans say...

## WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

Postmaster General DeJoy's plans are drawn directly from the 2018 plan of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to restructure the Postal System's business model, before transforming it into a privately held corporation. "USPS privatization through an initial public offering (IPO) or sale to another entity would require the implementation of significant reforms prior to sale to show a possible path to profitability," said the plan.

The National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) said the plan "would dramatically raise mailing costs for 'commercial mailers' and shippers, slash the frequency and quality of delivery and gut the standard of living of postal employees by outsourcing their jobs, stripping them of collective bargaining rights and reducing their retirement and workers' compensation benefits. These recommendations would weaken, not strengthen the Postal Service — and threaten the most efficient and affordable universal postal system in the world."

The American Postal Workers Union added: "The APWU also believes the Task Force's recommendations represent the first stage of getting the USPS ready for privatization, the clear goal of the current White House. *All told, the report has no less than 20 attacks on workers' rights, 13 threats to service and 13 privatization threats.*" (Italics in original)

The battle to defend and improve the people's postal service will be protracted and brutal. We must partner with those most impacted by the postal service — veterans, seniors, small businesses, non-profits, rural communities. We must ally with other essential workers, other public workers and other federal workers. We must revive the spirit and power of the great postal strike of 1970.