

# Communities and Postal Workers United

SUMMER 2026 -- *No Closures! No Cuts! No Delay of Mail!*

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## “NEXT GENERATION CARRIERS” RALLY NATIONWIDE

On May 23, 2026, the first day after the expiration of their collective bargaining agreement, letter carriers and supporters rallied outside their post offices, before work (see photos at right). Demanding a fair contract and an end to postal management bloat, “Next Generation Carriers” is organizing rank-and-file mobilizations to influence the outcome of union-management negotiations and/or an arbitration panel.

The NGC theme is “\$30 for 30”, that is a \$30 starting wage and only one manager for every 30 carriers.

The current ratio of management to carriers is 1 to 7. Decades ago, the ratio was 1 to 20. NGC is calling for a 75% reduction in management, which would save the USPS close to \$3 billion. Another idea being discussed is that of a “lead carrier”, similar to that of a “lead clerk” where many non-disciplinary tasks now performed by supervisors could be performed by an elected co-worker.

The \$30 starting wage is needed to retain new hires (currently there is an over 50% turnover in the first year). Both New York and California have campaigns afoot to raise the minimum wage to \$30/hour. According to MIT’s living wage calculator, a living wage for a single adult with no dependents in New York City is currently \$31.50 an hour.

### RALLIES FOR A FAIR CONTRACT – JULY 22

The Next Generation Carriers are now calling for nationwide rallies on July 22, the last day of the legally-mandated 60 days mediation, which could yield a tentative agreement or, more likely, taking the disagreement to binding arbitration (postal workers are legally prohibited from striking). NGC argues that massive, public mobilizations will pressure and influence a neutral arbitrator.

### COMPENSATION COMPARABLE TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR

While much attention is focused on the Postmaster General’s declaration that the postal service is “going broke by February 2027”, an arbitrator is prohibited from considering postal finances when deciding appropriate pay and benefits for postal workers. The Postal Reorganization Act of 1970 (as captured in Title 39 USCode §101) very clearly states ...”(c) As an employer, the Postal Service shall achieve and maintain compensation for its officers and employees comparable to the rates and types of compensation paid in the private sector of the economy of the United States...”

## DATA CENTERS RAISE YOUR UTILITY BILLS AI IS USED AGAINST YOU

You may have noticed utility bills going up; data centers will make that much worse. There’s already a water shortage in many states; data centers suck up huge amounts of water, poison well water and often replace huge swaths of farmland. Electricity use is increasing, outstripping supply; data centers use massive amounts of electricity and will require new infrastructure.

In worst-case scenarios, local politicians grant sweetheart deals to lure corporate data centers in exchange for the promise of (short-lived) construction jobs, then customers get stuck with huge rate increases, while the deal-makers hope that nobody notices the cause-and-effect.

Why are data centers being built everywhere? To power Artificial Intelligence (AI).

### AI DOESN’T WORK FOR YOU

AI is not just a fun tool for making goofy images. Its real world use is as a tool to replace people, eliminate jobs, and “increase productivity” (translation – make you work harder).

The Postal Service brags about its early use of AI. One example is its use to read handwritten addresses while processing letters, flats, or parcels. There were originally fifty-five remote encoding centers where APWU members would decipher and key in hard-to-read addresses. Now there is one left, thanks in part to AI technology.

The Postal Service also uses AI now in writing lengthy denials of union grievances. There is talk of AI setting up parcel runs and routing trucks. It is becoming an increasing reality, but at what cost?

There is growing awareness that data centers will cost you more, but benefit employers and investors. Now that you know, contact your elected officials and tell them what you think.



Postal workers from Pennsylvania, Michigan, Florida, Massachusetts, Iowa, California, Washington State, New York, organized to say:

**‘DON’T LET MANAGEMENT DESTROY THE WORLD’S BEST POSTAL SERVICE!’**

## FOUR UNIONS TO CONGRESS: FIX USPS FINANCES!

The heads of the four major postal craft unions signed a joint letter to Congress on May 1, 2026, which stated in part: “we write urging immediate congressional and administrative action to stabilize the United States Postal Service’s (USPS) finances.

In March, Postmaster General David Steiner testified before the House Oversight Subcommittee on Government Operations that the agency would run out of cash in 12 months. In April, USPS announced that it would temporarily pause employer contributions to the defined benefit portion of the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS)...

The four postal employee unions urge Congress to do the following:

1. Congress should increase the agency’s borrowing authority. USPS’s current \$15 billion borrowing authority has not been increased in decades, and does not meet current rates of inflation, nor does it meet the fiscal needs of one of the largest federal agencies.
2. Congress should approve a new investment strategy for USPS retiree health and pension funds, which currently sit in U.S. Treasury securities, missing out on hundreds of millions of dollars in potential annual returns.
3. In addition, we maintain that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) should fairly reallocate the Postal Service’s Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) pension obligations. For more than 50 years, the USPS has overpaid pension obligations that properly belong to the federal government, costing USPS more than \$90 billion. An administrative directive to OPM to fix the accounting issue is necessary.”

This letter only kicks off what should be a protracted effort to get Congress to pass much-needed changes to help postal finances.

While no concrete legislation has yet appeared, the next step is for everyone who supports the Postal Service to educate ourselves, fellow union members, and communities about what is needed.

Locals and branches should start preparing to visit the congressional offices in their areas to present copies of the above letter, while emphasizing that America still needs a strong postal service as a basic public good.

Take action to protect our public postal service:

<https://actionnetwork.org/forms/speak-out-protect-our-public-post-office>



## EXPANDING ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT

### SERVICES THROUGH THE POSTAL NETWORK

(from *Save the Post Office*, [savethepostoffice.com](http://savethepostoffice.com), March 15, 2026)

[The Office of the Inspector General of the US Postal Service is calling out the USPS for not acting on the opportunities presented by the Postal Reform Act of 2022, which allows the postal service to contract with local, state and tribal governments, as well as the federal government, to utilize postal facilities and personnel to provide non-postal services. Not only would expanding non-postal services benefit the public, especially in rural areas, but would provide much needed postal revenue]

“The U.S. Postal Service maintains an unrivaled presence in American life, utilizing more than 33,000 retail locations and a workforce of over 640,000 employees to reach every home and business six days a week. While USPS’s primary mission is mail and package delivery, it also manages a portfolio of non-postal government services that generated \$387 million in revenue during fiscal year (FY) 2025. However, this revenue stream is heavily dependent on passport services — with passport processing accounting for approximately 80 percent of total earnings — and all active partnerships remain exclusively at the federal level.

“The landscape for providing government services shifted significantly with the Postal Service Reform Act of 2022, which gave USPS the authority to partner with state, local, and tribal governments for non-commercial public services. Despite this legal green light and the Postal Service’s Delivering for America plan’s goal of becoming a national “government storefront,” the organization has not yet established a formal strategy or initiated outreach to explore these new non-federal opportunities.

“USPS OIG discussions with state and federal officials highlight the untapped potential of new government partnerships, particularly in rural and underserved areas where the post office often serves as a primary civic hub. Potential growth is evident in providing in-person identity verification for social benefit programs like SNAP or Medicaid, and in streamlining high-assurance biometric services, such as fingerprinting for state professional licensing. Facilities could also transform into digital access points by hosting DMV or IRS kiosks in “service deserts” where residents currently travel long distances for simple renewals or tax assistance. Additionally, USPS could lease rooftop space for 5G and broadband infrastructure to help bridge the digital divide in the thousands of underserved counties it already serves.

“Future possibilities also include equipping the delivery fleet with sensors for passive data collection on air quality and road conditions, and leveraging the last-mile network to report infrastructure failures during national disasters. To turn these concepts into reality, the Postal Service could look toward international peers in Australia, France, and Italy, which have built successful government service portfolios through proactive sales teams and centralized management units. These operators thrive by standardizing their offerings to lower technical costs and using market intelligence to target areas where private competition is absent.

“Currently, the Postal Service’s approach to government partnerships remains largely reactive and fragmented across multiple departments. To capitalize on its vast infrastructure and the interest expressed by state agencies, the OIG recommends postal leadership develop a unified strategic roadmap. This plan would outline the steps necessary to identify, evaluate, and prioritize expansion opportunities across all levels of government, finally moving the organization beyond case-by-case federal agreements toward its vision of a modern, multi-level government storefront.”

See OIG report here



[ Time to call on postal unions and Congress to push the USPS to adopt these OIG recommendations! ]

### KEEP UP ON THE LATEST FIGHTBACK!

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## LET'S SUBSIDIZE RURAL POSTAL SERVICE

Hidden in the discussion of postal financial losses is the obvious disparity between costs of urban-suburban postal service and that of rural postal service.

Rural postal service operates at a loss primarily due to low population density, which results in high transportation and labor costs per delivery, whereas urban-suburban service generates a surplus through high-volume, efficient delivery to densely packed addresses.

Rural postal service requires financial support because remote delivery is structurally unprofitable.

The core economic challenges include:

#### High Costs per Delivery

- Extreme Distances: Drivers travel long distances between stops.
- Fuel Costs: High mileage burns more fuel per letter.
- Vehicle Wear: Unpaved or poorly maintained roads damage vehicles.
- Time Inefficiency: Carriers spend more hours driving than delivering.

#### Low Revenue Potential

- Low Density: Few households exist per square mile.
- Low Volume: Remote addresses receive fewer total packages.
- Fixed Rates: Stamps cost the same regardless of distance.
- No Price Surcharges: USPS cannot legally raise rural prices.

#### Last-Mile Dependency

- Private Drops: FedEx and UPS hand off packages to USPS.
- Unprofitable Routes: Private companies skip the costly "last mile."

**Forced Burden:** USPS absorbs these unprofitable deliveries.

The Postal Service is mandated by its Universal Service Obligation (USO) to deliver to all 157 million U.S. addresses, regardless of cost, making rural service a non-profitable, yet necessary, public good, while profitable city routes effectively subsidize these remote areas.

Title 39, US Code 101 mandates:

“... (b) The Postal Service shall provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to rural areas, communities, and small towns where post offices are not self-sustaining. No small post office shall be closed solely for operating at a deficit, it being the specific intent of the Congress that effective postal services be insured to residents of both urban and rural communities...”

### OTHER COUNTRIES SUBSIDIZE RURAL POSTAL SERVICE

Several countries, particularly in Europe and the Asia-Pacific region, directly subsidize their rural postal networks to maintain affordable delivery and accessibility. These subsidies are often tied to a Universal Service Obligation (USO) requiring the national operator to provide uniform delivery rates regardless of location.

Countries that directly subsidize rural postal services include:

- France: The French government heavily subsidizes its national operator (*La Poste*) to maintain the country's extensive rural post office and banking network.
- United Kingdom: The UK government directly subsidizes *Post Office Ltd* to keep smaller, often rural, branches open and viable.
- India: The national government provides extensive funding to *India Post* to operate all operations, largely to ensure connectivity across isolated rural regions.
- Japan & South Korea: Both nations mandate strict universal service and use state backing to ensure that even the most remote, mountainous, or island communities receive daily, affordable service.

Other European Nations: Countries including Belgium, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Poland, and Spain provide government funding to ensure their postal operators can absorb the high costs of low-density rural routes

Rural residents tend to be more reliant on the USPS for voting, are often elderly or veterans receiving medications through the mail, or small businesses needing mail service to ship and receive, may be unable to access high speed internet and tend to use their local post office as a town hub for information and connection.

Isn't it time for Congress to seriously consider subsidizing rural postal services?