

Communities and Postal Workers United (CPWU)

WINTER 2025 -- *No Closures! No Cuts! No Delay of the Mail!* - www.cpwunited.com

TRUMP TALKS USPS PRIVATIZATION, AGAIN

(Excerpt from an article by David Yao, Vice President, Greater Seattle Area Local, American Postal Workers Union)

“Privatization of the US. Postal Service was raised, as an idea, in two different departments of the first Trump presidential administration. Obviously, that did not occur, and it never seemed to reach the stage of active discussion.

Once again, as a second Trump administration begins, the idea has been publicly raised. The Washington Post had a front-page headline: “Trump eyes privatizing US. Postal Service, citing financial losses.”

One Trump economist was quoted as saying that other carrier services “are doing things so much better with increased volumes and reduced costs.” What that economist doesn’t care about is the fact that other carriers ignore unprofitable areas of the country, while the Postal Service is required to serve poor and rural areas as part of its universal service obligation. It’s alarming that he was further quoted as saying “we didn’t finish the job in the first term, but we should finish it now.”

The future “Department of Government Efficiency” which is cited as a “nongovernmental panel led by tech entrepreneurs Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy”, was reported as having “had preliminary conversations about major changes to the Postal Service.”

The article reported that our employer had a 9.5 billion dollar loss in the year ending September 30, and has nearly \$80 billion in liabilities. It said that “Cuts to the Postal Service could upend the trillion-dollar e-commerce industry, hitting small businesses and rural consumers whose businesses and budgets make the agency the shipper of choice.”

Importantly, it notes that, “Attempts to privatize one of the most prominent parts of the federal government could spark a political backlash, especially for Republicans representing rural districts that the agency disproportionately serves.”

A follow-up article pointed out that, in rural areas, such a move would mean higher prices and worse service. For-profit corporations in general do not want to serve sparsely populated areas, as their costs are higher and profits lower or non-existent. Rural areas tended to vote more heavily for Trump, and their congressional representatives would surely balk at moves that would jeopardize a basic service for their constituents...

It is by no means a certainty that the Trump administration will put a lot of weight behind this, as follow-up remarks by Trump were more ambiguous. And another Washington Post article pointed out that Trump often issues statements that he doesn’t follow up on.

Nevertheless, the threat of privatization should be taken very seriously, as any form of it could threaten jobs (meaning, layoffs), our working conditions (worse understaffing), our wages (pressure on our contracts both during and outside of contract expiration dates), and damage to service to the American public (causing damage to our reputation and our popular support).

While there are obstacles to privatization, that threat should make us pay more careful attention to what steps we can take to shore up public sentiment, to keep the USPS as a non-profit whose goal should be serving the public, not making future shareholders richer.”



POSTAL PRIVATIZATION = JOBS LOST, WORSE SERVICE, WORSE WORKING CONDITIONS

A study of the results of postal privatization in eleven different countries provides evidence that it is a bad idea for workers and the public.

“Started in the 1990s, postal service liberalization [meaning full or partial privatization] was aimed at enhancing the quality of services, bringing down prices and encouraging economic and employment growth. Thirty years on, the results of the overall process appear to be lower than expected.

“In all the countries included in the present study, prices of services covered by the universal service obligation (USO) have increased, with some countries experiencing rises as high as +80%....

“...the quality of services has gone down...the number of delivery days per week is decreasing and delivery times are growing.

“From a market point of view, liberalization has supported the growth of e-commerce and boosted the business model of the top...parcel operators. It has also forced former monopolists ([the public postal services]) to modernize their facilities and reorient their business models towards the growing parcel market. However, at the same time, liberalization has weakened the way in which public service obligations are fulfilled and financed, in turn encouraging the development of competition based essentially on the cost of labor [companies compete based on who can pay the lowest wages].

“For postal sector workers, the changes have been overwhelmingly negative and labor shortages have become a global issue. Liberalization has led to a sharp drop in employment in the sector since the beginning of the century, growth in alternative modes of employment and a sharp deterioration of working conditions.

It has also disrupted the social ties existing between postmen and the population, despite the fact that the “postman” remains one of the most popular figures in the collective imagination. As liberalization is a still ongoing process and as the prevailing market developments are expected to continue (falling letter post volumes, increasing e-commerce shipments), the above-mentioned trends are expected to continue, at the expense of workers’ well-being and the quality of services...” (underlining added for emphasis)

The above is excerpted from the Executive Summary of a 2018 study by UNI Global Union, a worldwide labor federation of more than twenty million postal and other workers. Scan the QR code or this link <https://tinyurl.com/PostalPrivatization> for the full report.



SAVE USPS'S GREEN FLEET FROM TRUMP'S CLIMATE ROLLBACKS!

Trump's plans to cancel the USPS's electric vehicle contracts threaten manufacturing jobs, postal workers' safety, our communities and our planet. Scan the QR code or link to sign the petition: <https://actionnetwork.org/letters/protect-usps-green-trucks-investments>



CONSOLIDATION THREATENS TO RIP 'SERVICE' OUT OF POSTAL SERVICE

October 30, 2024 / Alexandra Bradbury (excerpted from Labor Notes)

Workers are battling an overhaul of the U.S. Postal Service that would cost thousands of jobs and slow the mail for [over] half the country...

Postal workers are the nation's biggest union workforce—585,000 strong, split across four unions. They're half women, 30 percent Black, and 16 percent veterans.

Thousands of their jobs are at stake under Postmaster General Louis DeJoy's 10-year "Delivering for America" modernization plan, which would [consolidate] 200 mail processing plants and funnel all [local, outgoing] mail to 60 mega-plants called Regional Processing and Distribution Centers (RPDCs), each with a football-field-sized parcel sorting machine—a series of conveyor belts, scanners, and chutes that can sort 5,000 packages an hour.

Demand for this service has declined in our era of email and electronic payments—but it's still significant. Last year USPS carried 59 billion pieces of first class mail, 3 billion periodicals, and 7 billion packages.

USPS is also still the biggest package shipper, though probably not for long. Last year Amazon leapfrogged UPS, and it is close on the Postal Service's heels.

Muddying those figures is the fact that USPS actually completes the "last mile" of delivery for a substantial share of Amazon and UPS packages. Even as Amazon expands its subcontracted, nonunion delivery force, it's likely to keep leaning on USPS whenever deliveries are too far-flung and labor-intensive to be profitable.

Competition from USPS also keeps a lid on the rates that UPS and FedEx can get away with.

Under DeJoy's plan, some of the downgraded plants would also house Sorting and Delivery Centers (S&DCs), another new type of facility: home base for letter carriers from five to 10 zip codes.

Many carriers would commute 30-45 minutes to pick up the mail from an S&DC, then drive straight back to their delivery neighborhood in a rickety USPS delivery truck—and reverse those steps again at the end of the day.

What's behind all the attacks on the postal service? Unlike other public services that are perennially on the chopping block, USPS already gets zero tax dollars.

Postal unionists have their own vision for modernizing USPS: rather than cutting costs, raising revenue by expanding services. Since letter carriers are already visiting every door, why not offer an option where they check in on elderly residents? Since post offices are already in every community, why not make them hubs for internet access, fishing licenses, passport renewals, electric vehicle charging, and even basic banking as an alternative to predatory check-cashing stands?

CONTACT YOUR STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Ask them to sue the USPS to pause all consolidations of mail processing, distribution, delivery and trucking because the consolidations cause mail delays that threaten vote-by-mail and discriminate against rural communities. The AGs have done it before. On August 18, 2020, a suit by thirteen Attorney's General, was critical in stopping Postmaster General Louis DeJoy's degradation of postal service in the run-up to the 2020 election.

Scan the QR code or the link to see the list and suit:

<https://tinyurl.com/AttyGeneral>



KEEP UP ON THE LATEST FIGHTBACK!

cpwunited.com agrandalliance.org
apwu.org nalc.org npmhu.org nrlca.org
savethepostoffice.com bit.ly/SaveOurPostalService



Letter carriers rally against weak union contract settlement (Portland, OR 11/3/24)

OIG SLAMS "TRANSPORTATION OPTIMIZATION" COSTS RISE, SERVICE SCORES DROP

The USPS Office of Inspector General issued a report on 12/18/24 that included an audit of "Transportation Optimization," which cuts out evening trips to post offices – meaning collection mail sits overnight and is delayed. Customers were not forewarned, and complaints increased. In January 2025 this drastic move, renamed Regional Transportation Optimization (RTO) hits 72% of all post offices nationwide – the ones furthest from processing plants – and will affect nearly half the country's population

Background—The U.S. Postal Service began deploying a major change to operations in October 2023 with the implementation of the Local Transportation Optimization (LTO) initiative ... The initiative is generally designed to reduce the number of transportation trips to and from select post offices and increase the amount of mail transported on each trip. With LTO, mail collected at offices will remain there until the next day, delaying its entry into sorting operations...

What We Found—While safeguards were appropriately implemented to secure the mail held overnight at the LTO optimized offices, we found the LTO initiative negatively impacted service to customers. The service performance scores for First-Class Mail declined after the implementation of LTO, more significantly impacting the rural population. Additionally, customer complaints about mail delivery delays increased after the LTO implementation. Further, management did not maintain an accurate list of optimized offices, negatively impacting its ability to calculate realized cost savings. Finally, overall transportation expenditures increased by \$7.13 million for the 15 LTO implemented regions when compared to the same period last year. (underlining added for emphasis) For the full report scan the QR code or this link <https://www.uspsoig.gov/reports/audit-reports/network-changes-local-transportation-optimization>



Scan the QR code or the link to sign the petition:
SAY NO TO THE POSTAL SLOWDOWN
<https://actionnetwork.org/letters/say-no-to-the-postal-slowdown>



DESPITE THE SUSPENSION OF PUBLIC TESTIMONY WE WON'T BE SILENCED!

Scan the QR code or the link to sign the petition:
<https://actionnetwork.org/letters/we-wont-be-silenced-postal-governors-must-allow-public-testimony>



POSTAL BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING
Fri Feb 7, 1pm ET, USPS HQ in DC
Pause Consolidations, Restore Jobs and Service !
Stop Consolidations! Stop Mail Carrier Displacement!