



## The Circus Is In Town

No not Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey Circus. That show is taking residence at the Patriot Center, in Fairfax, VA, home of NCAA Final Four participant George Mason University. No, I am referring to the three ring spectacle that occurred in and around the U.S. Capitol this week.

Former GOP House Majority Leader Tom Delay (R-TX) announced his intention to resign his congressional seat by mid-June. Though expected, the decision comes after a former high-ranking aide pleaded guilty to using Delay's Leadership office to promote a lobbying enterprise. The aide conducted the illegal activity while he was working on the congressman's staff. Consequently, the Majority Leader's office has been characterized as a "clearinghouse for scandal." Delay has been a lightning rod on Capitol Hill for many years. However, mounting legal and ethical problems, including a too-cozy relationship with former lobbyist Jack Abramoff, and serious doubts about his ability to defend his congressional seat against an aggressive campaign by former Rep. Nick Lampson convinced him to deny the voters the opportunity to vote him out of office. Delay chose to leave Congress, arguably, on his own terms. His decision to vacate the seat makes it more likely that his Republican leaning district will stay GOP.



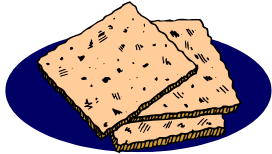
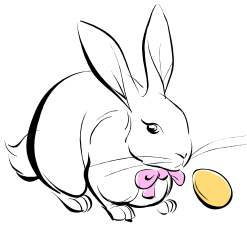
Rep. Delay  
Resigning

A Federal Grand Jury is reviewing a complaint against Rep. Cynthia McKinney (D-GA), alleging that she assaulted a U.S. Capitol Police Officer. Rep. McKinney struck the officer with her cell phone when he attempted to stop her from skirting a metal detector. Ordinarily, Members of Congress are able to avoid the security device. However, the officer on duty did not recognize McKinney. She had a new hairdo and she was not wearing her Congressional Pin. The Congresswoman, an African American, asserted that she was a victim of racial profiling and she should have been recognized. The incident took place on Wednesday, March 29. On Thursday, after considerable Congressional Black Caucus and Democratic Caucus pressure, McKinney apologized for her actions on the House floor.



Rep. McKinney  
Apologizing

House GOP leaders sent its members home for the 2-week Easter Recess, without passing a Fiscal Year 2007 Budget. Passing a budget was an election-year GOP priority. The House Budget Committee approved the Budget Resolution (HCR 376) by a partisan 22-17 majority. **It is important to note that, through NAPUS strong legislative efforts, the FY 2007 Budget resolution did not include any cuts to postmaster benefits.** The failure to pass the Budget resolution is the result of two factors: A three-way Republican power struggle among members of the Appropriations Committee, members of the conservative Republican Study Committee, and GOP moderates; and the undivided opposition of House Democrats. The GOP Leadership intends to resume budget negotiations with its three warring factions after the recess.



The next *e-NAPUS Legislative & Political Bulletin* will be posted on Friday, April 28

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## Ready for Easter/Passover Recess?

So far, the 2<sup>nd</sup> session of the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress will not be distinguished by its legislative activity. Congress has been in session for only about 2 dozen days. However, the lack of Washington-based activity represents important opportunities to interact with your Member of Congress and Senators back home. Consequently, all NAPUS members should be communicating with their elected officials regarding the Postmasters legislative agenda during the current Easter/Passover Recess. Please review the issues that Postmasters are advancing at [http://www.napus.org/govrelations/legislative\\_issue\\_brief.pdf](http://www.napus.org/govrelations/legislative_issue_brief.pdf).

The major issue that NAPUS continues to promote is a practical, progressive and positive postal reform package. NAPUS is working with our House and Senate allies to achieve this result. NAPUS' National Officers continue to communicate with prospective House and Senate postal conferees, including Senators Collins, Lieberman and Carper, and Representatives Davis (VA), Waxman, McHugh, and Davis (IL) about those provisions that need to be addressed in the anticipated Conference. As demonstrated at the recent NAPUS Leadership Conference, it is equally important to educate your own Members of Congress and Senators about these issues. While they may not be a conferee, they can and do communicate NAPUS concerns to the conferee. Moreover, they will have a vote on a potential Conference Agreement.

There are a number of provisions that should be highlighted in District meetings with your elected representatives.

- Fair fiscal treatment of the USPS regarding the CSRS escrow account and CSRS military service credit should be stressed in congressional meetings during the current recess. The NAPUS message continues to be that the escrow account should be eliminated, and that the CSRS military service credit should be financed by the federal government, not the USPS. This provision is included in both House and Senate passed bills.
- The USPS needs the capability of asking a regulator for permission to adjust postage rates above simple inflation, under those cases where certain costs exceed the Consumer Price Index. This may be illustrated by the unabated escalation in fuel costs. These costs are impinging on family budgets. Imagine the impact that higher gasoline prices are having on the largest vehicle fleet in the nation. At the same time, NAPUS recognizes the importance of a meaningful postal index for our customers. NAPUS prefers the House-passed version.
- The USPS needs the ability to defer unused rate authority from one year to another. This price flexibility would provide the mailing public and the business community with under-cap postal increases, when economically necessary and fiscally responsible. This provision is included in the Senate bill.
- Rural and residential postal customers need to have single-piece parcels classified as a "market-dominant" postal product. This classification would help maintain universal parcel post at an affordable price. Categorizing these parcels as "completive" product would drive the USPS out of the parcel market or render the parcel post cost prohibitive. NAPUS supports the Senate provision on single-piece parcels.