

House Oversight & Government Reform Committee Organizes

At about 10 AM yesterday, Chairman Henry Waxman (D-CA) gaveled to order the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. Although the Committee addressed a handful of mundane organizational issues, such as approving Committee rules, Chairman Waxman and Ranking Republican Tom Davis (R-VA) set a bipartisan tone by which the group intends to conduct business. Both senior Committee members referenced the collaborative efforts that were necessary in passing the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act. In addition, Waxman and Davis pledged to work together on Committee investigations and oversight work.

The Committee passed its rules by voice vote, with one audible “no” vote, which Rep. Lynne Westmoreland (R-GA) cast. The new Committee rules create 5 subcommittees – 2 less than the 109th Congress. One of the new subcommittees is the Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, Postal Service, and the District of Columbia. This subcommittee has jurisdiction over federal and postal employee issues, including health, retirement, and life insurance. Also, the subcommittee covers the Postal Service, the affairs of Washington, DC, and national holidays and celebrations. Rep. Danny Davis (D-IL) will chair the subcommittee and Rep. Kenny Marchant (R-TX) will serve as the Ranking Republican. Rep. Marchant is not a stranger to NAPUS. The Congressman is beginning his second term in Congress and served as a member of the Government Reform Committee during 2005 and 2006. Two Republican members are noteworthy for their legislative experience with issues under the subcommittee’s jurisdiction. Rep. McHugh formerly chaired the Postal Subcommittee and Rep. Mica formerly chaired the Civil Service Subcommittee.

Subcommittee Members

Danny Davis (D-IL), Chair	<i>Kenny Marchant (R-TX), Ranking</i>
John Sarbanes (D-MD)	<i>John McHugh (R-NY)</i>
Elijah Cummings (D-MD)	<i>John Mica (R-FL)</i>
Dennis Kucinich (D-OH)	<i>Darrell Issa (R-CA)</i>
William Lacy Clay (D-MO)	<i>(Vacant)</i>
Stephen Lynch (D-MA)	

Based upon comments made by Waxman and Davis at the organizational meeting, the full Committee’s first focus will be allegations of fraud and abuse in the federal government and among its contractors. It does not appear that the Committee will undertake major legislative initiatives early in the 110th Congress. NAPUS would anticipate that the Federal-Postal Subcommittee will conduct early oversight hearings on the implementation of PL 109-435, the new postal reform statute.



NAPUS President Dale Goff and House Oversight and Government Reform Chairman Henry Waxman

GPO & WEP Legislation Introduced

Earlier this month, Sen. Diane Feinstein (D-CA) and Rep. Howard Berman (D-CA) introduced legislation to repeal the government pension offset (GPO) and the windfall elimination provision (WEP). These sections of the Social Security code reduce the Social Security benefits of certain civil service retirement system (CSRS) annuitants. The GPO and WEP DO NOT impact Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) annuitants because Congress designed FERS to be integrated with Social Security.

The House bill, H.R. 82, has garnered the cosponsorship of 140 Representatives, while S. 206, the Senate legislation, has 5 cosponsors. Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) is a cosponsor. H.R. 82 has been referred to the House Ways and Means Committee, and S. 206 has been referred to the Senate Finance Committee. Regrettably, only 7 of the 41 members of the House Ways and Means Committee have added their names to H.R. 82, and only 1 of the 21 members of the Senate Finance Committee. NAPUS intends to focus primarily on members who sit on the Committees of jurisdiction, since the success or failure of our efforts will be decided there. Rep. Charlie Rangel (D-NY) chairs the Ways and Means Committee, and Sen. Max Baucus (D-MT) chairs the Finance Committee.

The persistent stumbling to passing the elimination of the GPO and WEP has been the *cost* – approximately \$40 billion. Eliminating the punitive sections of the Social Security code would increase program expenses by the \$40 billion. Congressional budget rules would require the Ways and Means, and the Finance Committees to offset the increased expenditures attributable to passing either H.R. 82 or S. 206 by cutting benefits to another program under their jurisdiction (e.g., Medicare or Social itself) or increase taxes. NAPUS and others are looking for creative alternatives to offset the costs of mitigating, if not eliminating, the impact of GPO and WEP.

Renewing A Political Commitment

Last year was a watershed period for NAPUS. Postmasters successfully protected and promoted our legislative interests by being active and aggressive participants in the political arena. NAPUS members invested in their political future by generously contributing to NAPUS PAC, and by donating their time to the election campaigns of Members of 110th Congress. 2006 NAPUS PAC Chair Ron Woods (Postmaster of Chetopa, KS) boasts that, in 2006, NAPUS members contributed \$352,400 to help promote our political agenda; and we turned around and contributed almost all of it to support our successful political program. It's now time to rebuild our PAC and demonstrate to a new Congress how vibrant and active postmasters will be during the next 2 years. For this reason, NAPUS President Dale Goff has asked Ron Woods to extend his triumphant national PAC assignment for another year.

Currently, postmasters may join the PAC Team in either or all of 4 ways – reply to the upcoming direct mail solicitation; fill out an envelope at the 2007 NAPUS Leadership Conference (March 18-22), future District Meetings, or Chapter Conventions, etc.; enroll in the payroll allotment program through *PostalEase*; or sign up for an automatic NAPUS Credit Union allocation to NAPUS PAC. It is easy. Postmasters must invest in your political future by contributing to the most active and aggressive postal management PAC there is – NAPUS PAC!

**National Association of
Postmasters of the U.S.**

**8 Hebert Street
Alexandria, VA 22305**

**Tel. 703-683-9027
Fax. 703-683-0923**

We are on the Web!

www.napus.org