



The National Association of Postmasters of the United States

Legislative Agenda Leadership Conference 2008

NAPUS includes approximately 40,000 active and retired U.S. postmasters who serve and have served as the managers of the approximately 27,000 post office.

Safeguard Universal and Affordable Postal Services

NAPUS promotes a vibrant U.S. Postal Service, which continues to be a vital part of our national landscape. Last year, the Postal Service commenced operation under the framework constructed by PL109-435, the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act. The law established a new paradigm, in which the Postal Service and its employees, the Postal Regulatory Commission, and the Congress acquired specific responsibilities. However, the one-year-old law did not modify the USPS' mission to provide universal mail service. This sacred duty is challenged by the decline in First class mail and a fragile national economy. NAPUS maintains its relentless interest in ensuring postal customers – residential and commercial – have access to the high quality postal services that they expect and deserve, through legislative and regulatory means.

NAPUS is working to ensure that PL109-435 is implemented properly by urging Congress to exercise aggressive and appropriate oversight over the USPS and the PRC. In addition, NAPUS will be seeking to further the operational and fiscal viability of a universal postal service by:

- Asking Congress to pass legislation permitting the USPS to apply for a Medicare Part D Subsidy: In 2006, Medicare-eligible individuals were able to purchase drug coverage through Medicare. The Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) already provides its beneficiaries with superior prescription benefits. Therefore, postal retirees do not enroll in Medicare Part D. The Part D statute enables employers who provide drug benefits equivalent or better than Medicare to claim a rebate for each participant who could have enrolled in Part D, but did not. The subsidy is valued at \$600 per retiree. The USPS applied for the subsidy, but the Administration rejected the application. Consequently, NAPUS supports legislation to enable the USPS to apply for the subsidy.
- Educating Legislators about the danger of establishing a “Do-Not-Mail List”: Numerous state legislatures have pending bills that would create a list of postal customers who do not want to receive unsolicited mail, such as posted advertisements. While there is no legislation pending before Congress, NAPUS is concerned about the state initiatives. “Do- Not-Mail” registries would have a devastating effect on the mailing economy and could displace countless Americans who work in postal-impacted companies. In addition, the registry would result in a precipitous drop in mail volume, depriving the USPS of essential revenue that maintains universal mail services. If necessary, NAPUS will educate Congress about the dangers of a Do-Not-Mail Registry.
- Requesting Congress to assist states in launching Vote-By-Mail: Two bills are pending before Congress that would establish federal grants to promote vote-by-mail. Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR) introduced S. 979 and Rep. Susan Davis (D-CA) introduced H.R. 1667. In addition, Rep. Davis sponsored H.R. 281, which would permit eligible voters to cast a mail-in ballot in federal elections. NAPUS believes that vote-by-mail offers America a convenient, secure and inexpensive way of increasing electoral participation.

- Defending Post Offices: Over the past year, the NAPUS Post Office Closings and Consolidation Committee has worked with communities throughout the country to save their post offices from closure and consolidation. Congress has also proclaimed strong support of small and rural post offices. Rep. JoAnn Emerson (R-MO) introduced legislation (House Concurrent Resolution 13) to protect small and rural post offices. The measure expresses the sense of Congress that the USPS should provide regular mail service to all communities, and should take all steps to ensure that post offices are not closed or consolidated. NAPUS strongly supports House Concurrent Resolution 13.

Defend Postmaster Retirement Equity

NAPUS supports legislation to restore equity and fairness to postal retirees and their dependents. Over the past forty years, Congress and the White House have attempted to chip away at the financial security of postmaster retirees, or denied them benefits provided to their actively employed counterparts. Legislation is pending to alleviate the financial penalty suffered by retired postmasters who would otherwise be eligible for full Social Security survivor benefits, retired postmasters who would otherwise be eligible for full Social Security annuities and retired postmasters who would otherwise benefit from their FEHBP premium paid on a pre-tax basis.

- NAPUS supports legislation to alleviate the unfair impact levied against postmaster retirees by the *Government Pension Offset* rule. The GPO can reduce or eliminate the Social Security spousal or survivor benefits for an otherwise eligible retired postmaster. NAPUS also supports legislation to remedy the inequity of the *Windfall Elimination Provision*. The WEP can reduce the earned Social Security benefit by up to 60% of an otherwise eligible retired postmaster. H.R. 82 and S. 206, the Social Security Fairness Act, which repeals both the GPO and WEP, are pending before the House Ways and Means Committee, and the Senate Finance Committee.
- NAPUS SUPPORTS H.R. 1110 and S. 773, legislation to permit federal and postal retirees to pay their FEHBP premiums on a pre-tax basis.
- NAPUS opposes a proposal included in the President's Fiscal Year 2008 Budget that would base the retiree FEHBP contribution on years of federal or postal service.

Leave Equity

NAPUS supports legislation to permit FERS-covered employees to receive compensation for unused sick leave upon retirement. Presently, only employees who participate in the Civil Service Retirement System are afforded the opportunity to receive compensation for their unused leave. Rep. James Moran is sponsoring legislation (bill has not been numbered at the time of printing) which would reimburse retiring FERS employees no more than \$10,000 for their sick leave.

- Legislation would enable postmasters and other managers to better administer work schedules, by reducing the occurrence of extended sick leave by employees at the twilight of their careers.
- For the purpose of sick leave, legislation would treat FERS and CSRS employees in a non-discriminatory fashion.

NAPUS Government Relations Department
Robert M. Levi, Director
 Tel. 703-683-9027
 Fax 703-683-0923
blevi@napus.org