

# ***Iowa State Association of Letter Carriers***



## ***President's Report***

August 2011

Greetings Sisters and Brothers,

Where to start - so many things have happened the past few weeks that it makes your head spin.

While we're pounding the pavement to deliver the goods it seems that those left in the building are delivering schemes to Congress and the media. No wonder we've seen an increase in the number of positions at postal headquarters over the last decade. They need more people to share the blame for so many irresponsible ideas.

We need to be focused on fixing the pre-funding of future retiree benefits that Congress has required. We need to continue to demand, beg and/or cajole Congress into allowing us to use billions of our own dollars that we overpaid into FERS and CSRS retirement funds. By doing so we would be on solid financial ground. It is such a simple fix.

But management is throwing out so many ideas that they are distracting Congress and the public from the problem at hand and creating more obstacles to overcome.

The Postal Service wants to close up shop in the smaller towns because it's too expensive to run the company. Has someone forgotten the concept of universal service? Management wants to reduce the number of days we operate because it's too expensive to deliver mail? We're taking the focus away from the root cause of our financial problem by giving the media something else to talk about.

Local managers get upset on days when there's too much mail to deliver in the prescribed number of hours. Say what? Do you see your local grocery store shutting its doors if too many customers show up to buy bananas and mac & cheese? How many close on Sunday evening because it's a slower day compared to the rest of the week? Do newspaper and magazines stop selling subscriptions because they might have to buy more paper and ink? Or stop printing a Monday edition just because it's the least read? No - that's not what they want people to see. They want their customers to know that they will be there when they need them.

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If it is indeed too expensive to provide universal service, and raising rates is not an option, maybe we should be asking Congress for taxpayer assistance. Bail us out or allow us to use our own money. I prefer being allowed to use our own money. If those are the choices, I would think Congress would see it that way as well.

We are on the path to financial ruin because of Congressional mandates - and now management wants Congress to consider allowing them to administer a health plan and retirement system on their own. I think management has enough on their plate without adding more administrative duties in an area in which they have no expertise. More distractions - let's focus on one issue and get it fixed.

Answer the call when it's time to contact your Congressman. Sign up to be an [e-Activist](#) so you have the latest information. You might even win \$100 – and save your job.

In Unionism,

Jim Beach  
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