



# REGION 5 NBA REPORT



September 2013

National Business Agent's Report

NALC

As we see another summer slipping through our fingers we also see the end of the Postal Service's 2013 Fiscal Year coming to a rapid close. With the end of the Fiscal Year comes the evaluation of the past year; were goals met, what were the successes, what were the failures, did we make money, did we lose money...the list is endless. However, one thing will remain constant; the Postal Service will tell each one of us how we didn't do our part and how we must do better and if we don't—we are somehow the problem. You know this is what will happen; you've heard it before and will likely hear it again. The truth is, we can do better—but not in the same way the Postal Service means it.

What are the real hindrances to a successful and, dare I say, profitable Postal Service? For one, a short sighted Postmaster General (PMG) who seems to have no vision for the future of the Postal Service; a future which adapts to the changing cycles of business and takes full advantage of the electronic commerce engine which is driving our economy. He seems to think the only way to survive is to keep doing the same thing over and over and hope for the best. The PMG only sees the business we do now and never looks at what we could do in the future. A lot of people think Einstein defined *Insanity* as; *doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result*. Actually, it was Rita Mae Brown in her book *Sudden Death* but it doesn't really matter the definition is absolutely on point when it comes to the current leadership of the Postal Service. Their current philosophy of shrink to survive is really just trying the same, tired old thing over and over again hoping for a different result. It won't work!

We can't directly change the PMG's thinking that is clear. However, if we can't change Postal leaderships thinking we need to work to change the very leadership structure of the Postal Service itself. I know many of you are sick to death of hearing about politics and Congress and anything to do with Washington but the reality is this; you work for the Federal government and you have some very serious 'skin in the game;--your job and your future—and dealing with Congress is part of it. If you don't give a hoot about politics then give a hoot about your family and their future. Currently, some in Congress are talking about us as if we were a commodity which can be cast aside. Did you know the *House Oversight and Government Reform Committee* just passed HR 2748—the bill Rep. Darrel Issa introduced—which would eliminate 6-Day mail delivery and compel the installation of Centralized Delivery Units affecting as much as 20% of current deliveries and almost all new deliveries? The bill would also continue the real cause of the Postal Service's financial woes, the Pre-Funding of Future Retiree's Health Benefits--\$5.5 Billion/year. Does your Congressman support this bill or oppose it? You should know, or you should find out. If this bill becomes law we are in deep trouble!

Not that the Issa bill isn't bad enough, just as I am writing this article a new, possibly more destructive, piece of legislation has been proposed in the Senate. S. 1486 was co-sponsored by Tom Carper (D-Delaware) and Tom Coburn (R-Oklahoma) which would specifically continue the Pre-Funding and eliminate at least Saturday delivery

and give the PMG complete authority to end delivery on other days if he deems it necessary.. While this is supposedly “bi-partisan” legislation, it has a unilateral intent—drive the Postal Service out of business. The bill would eliminate 80,000 jobs almost immediately. The bill would put Postal employee’s wages, retirement and health care benefits before an Interest Arbitrator to determine if they should be reduced. The presidents of the four major Postal union recently sent a letter to Majority Leader Reid protesting S. 1486. Every letter carrier should be calling their Senator asking them to absolutely oppose S.1486! If you want to read more about this devastating bill go to: [http://nalc.org/news/latest/2013-08-05\\_carper-coburn\\_letter.html](http://nalc.org/news/latest/2013-08-05_carper-coburn_letter.html) Opposing this bill is just as important as opposing the Issa bill, HR 2748. These are both real threats to us!

As horrible as these bills are, they aren’t the only pieces of legislation important to letter carriers and our families. Senate Bill S.316 has been introduced and supports 6-Day Delivery. We have four states in our Region and only one of our eight US Senators—Tom Harkin of Iowa—have supported S 316 by being a co-sponsor. There is the companion bill to S 316 in the House—HR 630—did you know that only four US Representatives co-signed this bill? In our Region there are 21 US Representatives and only Clay and Cleaver (MO) and Braley and Loeb sack (IA) have co-sponsored legislation to preserve 6-Day Delivery—that is less than 20%! If you are reading this then I will assume you care about the Postal Service and your future but caring isn’t enough. Have you actually done anything about it? Have you written a letter or email expressing your support of either bill? Have you made a phone call? If not, why not?

Our Congressional representatives are home for their Summer recess. They will be in your districts; they will be at events and parades, they will be busy shaking hands, kissing...babies, telling you what they’ve done and asking for support. Make sure they know your support is conditional! We only support those who support letter carrier issues. If they do support letter carrier issues, make sure you support them. Show your support by wearing letter carrier T-shirts at events or even volunteer to march in a Labor Day parade they are participating in if that’s what it takes. The point; make sure your elected officials know what you want—Big Money sure does. And don’t for a moment think Big Money isn’t influencing the current debate—they want your job, they want your future and they want it for less. .

Look, I know things are hard right now and there are a lot of changes taking place in our country as well as our workplace but please, don’t be discouraged. Remember, we live in a blessed and free land which allows us to speak our minds and work through our differences. We hold our fate in our own hands. We have the ability to stand up and fight or lie down and be run over. I don’t think I can stomach the latter so I will fight. We should and must fight for what is right and what is good for our jobs and our country. I won’t be silent and I’m asking you to join with me and all the other letter carriers who have the courage to stand with us. The fight is on—do your part!

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