

# American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

## MEMORANDUM

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March 5, 2022

**To:** President Dimondstein and National Presidents' Conference attendees

**Subject:** Legislative and Political Department Report

Brothers and Sisters,

I am writing today to give you an update on the activities of the Legislative and Political Department. 2022 has proven to be a critical year in our fight to preserve the public Postal Service. If you have any questions regarding this report, please reach out to my department by contacting 202-842-4211 or email me at [jbeard@apwu.org](mailto:jbeard@apwu.org).

### POSTAL REFORM

On February 8, the Postal Service Reform Act of 2021 (H.R. 3076) passed with overwhelming support in the House of Representatives by a vote of 342-92. This level of bipartisan support is rare these days. The companion legislation in the Senate currently has strong bipartisan support with 14 Republicans as co-sponsors. The Senate is expected to take up this legislation next week. We have maintained the position, along with the other postal unions, that we do not want any amendments to **this legislation**. We developed and posted an extensive Q & A on the APWU webpage that goes into detail on the different sections of the legislation.

### LEGISLATIVE ACTION

We continue to fight for legislation that would benefit APWU members, retirees, the USPS, and the general public. Some legislation/areas of interest include (but are not limited to):

- Postal Service Reform Act of 2022, H.R. 3076, being signed into law;
- Electric Vehicle fleet and charging infrastructure
  - 6-7 billion was included in the Build Back Better Act that stalled out
- Voting Rights
  - John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (H.R. 4 [Passed House])
  - For the People Act (H.R. 1 [passed house])
  - Freedom to Vote Act, the compromise bill Manchin supports (S. 2747)
- Social Security Fairness Act, H.R. 82 and S. 1302;
- USPS Shipping Equity Act, H.R. 3287 and S. 1663;
- The Pro Act (Protecting the Right to Organize), H.R. 842



# American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

Mark Dimondstein, President  
Judy Beard, Legislative & Political Director



117<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS

## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

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Contact the APWU Legislative and Political Department at (202) 842-4211 for more information  
A complete list of APWU Legislative Priorities is available at [apwu.org](http://apwu.org)

UPDATED: OCTOBER 2021





# American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

Mark Dimondstein, President  
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## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

ISSUE #20

117<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS

### The Postal Service Reform Act of 2022

The Postal Service Reform Act was initially introduced in the House on May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021 by Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) and Ranking Member James Comer (R-KY). **On February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022, The Postal Service Reform Act of 2022 (H.R. 3076) passed in the House with overwhelming support by a vote of 342-92.**

### A Positive Step Forward

*"After 15 years of fighting for much-needed and long-overdue reforms, we are one step away from securing a critical victory for postal workers, the Postal Service and the public who rely on us," said APWU President Mark Dimondstein. "The strong bi-partisan support for this legislation is a testament to the unrivaled service postal workers provide to people and communities across this country, no matter who we are or where we live."*

*"The American Postal Workers Union extends our appreciation to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, House Committee on Oversight and Reform Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney, and Ranking Member James Comer—all of whom made forward movement on this bill a reality," said APWU Legislative and Political Director Judy Beard.*

**The Postal Service Reform Act of 2022 will place the United States Postal Service on the path toward financial stability by:**

#### Maximizing Participation in Medicare

Maximizing participation in Medicare by providing prospective Medicare integration. Active postal employees and retirees will be p

laced in a postal-only Federal Employee Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) and fully integrate into Medicare Parts A and B when eligible. Current retirees, age 65 or above, who **have not previously enrolled in Medicare B**, will be allowed to do so with a one-time waiver of the late enrollment penalty.

#### Adding Postal Service Transparency

The bill would require USPS to set up a public "doshboord" on their website which will publish weekly performance data. **These tools will also allow us to determine specific areas across the country in need of additional postal investment.**

#### Repealing the Pre-funding Mandate

This postal reform legislation would repeal the onerous and financially debilitating pre-funding mandate, which requires USPS to fully pre-fund the health benefits for postal workers 75 years in advance.

#### Ensuring Six Day Delivery

In order to remain competitive and provide the kind of service people across this country **deserve**, this bill includes language that would protect six-day delivery.

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APWU's Legislative and Political Department is proud of the work carried out by APWU members, the other postal unions, community organizations, and our allies for the efforts leading up to House passage of this bill.

*"Thanks to our collective efforts, we are closer than ever to securing the most pivotal piece of postal legislation in generations," said APWU President Mark Dimondstein.*

The bill now moves to the Senate where the "Postal Reform Act (PRSA)" has already received bi-partisan support. It's taken years of effort to get this far. Now we need to raise our collective voices to make sure the Senate moves quickly to pass the PSRA and send it to President Biden's desk. The APWU is urging all postal workers and our allies to call our senators and urge them to vote 'yes' on Postal Reform to strengthen the public Postal Service.

**The APWU believes this bill provides a workable route to achieve a robust future for America's Postal Service. Call your Senators office by dialing 844-402-1001 and urge them to pass the Postal Service Reform Act of 2022.**





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## THE POSTAL BOARD OF GOVERNORS

ISSUE #1

117<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS

### We Fought and We Won Three Pro-Postal Governors

The Postal Service has a Board of Governors that is responsible for major decisions about the Postal Service's operations, policies, and expenditures. The Board is made up of eleven members, which includes the Postmaster General and Deputy Postmaster General. Nine of the members, the Governors, are appointed by the President of the United States and confirmed by the Senate. Right now, there are six members and four vacancies on the Board.

On February 24<sup>th</sup>, President Joe Biden nominated Anton Hajjar, Amber McReynolds and Ron Stroman to fill three of the four openings. Hajjar, McReynolds, and Stroman better reflect the American people and will bring diverse perspectives to the Board.

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, the Senate Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs Committee (HSGAC) held a business meeting to consider pending nominations to the Postal Board of Governors.

Following a roll call vote on each of the nominees, the nominations of Hajjar, McReynolds, and Stroman were reported favorably to the Senate HSGAC. In the month of May over three separate votes, the full Senate confirmed all three of President Biden's nominations. They will all be sworn in to serve on the Postal BOG.

Thank you for making calls and emailing members of Congress to push these nominations forward. Now confirmed, Hajjar, McReynolds, and Stroman have the power to:

- Push for speedier delivery
- Fight against mail slow-downs and post office closures
- Defend and expand postal services
- Keep the Postal Service committed to vibrant, public and universal postal service
- Work to ensure election ballots are processed and delivered on time

### Learn More About the Nominees



**Anton Hajjar** is the former general counsel of the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO, and has significant experience representing unions and union workers. Hajjar has also served as an advisor and pro bono attorney in employment discrimination cases, including those of Arab- and Muslim-Americans following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, and continues to serve as a legal adviser to the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee. In 2002, he was elected to membership in the American Law Institute and currently serves on its governing Board. Hajjar received his Bachelor's degree from Fordham University, graduated with honors from Tulane University Law School, and clerked for Judge John Minor Wisdom of the Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.



**Amber McReynolds** is a leading expert on election administration and policy. She is currently the CEO of the National Vote at Home Institute, a non-partisan non-profit dedicated to expanding and improving vote-by-mail systems in all fifty states, and former Director of Elections for the City and County of Denver, Colorado, where her team implemented a first-in-the-nation ballot tracking, reporting, and communication program that increased accountability and enhanced security for mail ballots. McReynolds received her Bachelor's Degree from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana and her Master's Degree from the London School of Economics and Political Science.



**Ron Stroman** recently served as Deputy Postmaster General and Chief Governmental Relations Officer for the United States Postal Service. Stroman previously served in multiple roles in the House of Representatives including Staff Director and Minority Staff Director for the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, staff member on the Committee on Government Operations, and counsel for the House Judiciary Committee. Stroman has also previously worked in an executive role at the U.S. Department of Transportation and as an attorney with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. He received his Bachelor's Degree from Manhattan College and his J.D. from Rutgers University Law Center.

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## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

ISSUE #3

117<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS

### The Postal Improvement Act: H.R. 3077

In every election, postal workers go above and beyond when making sure mail-in ballots get to where they need to go. This previous year, with a record number of voters casting their ballots by mail amid a pandemic, the importance of the work carried out by postal employees was made that much more clear.

As postal workers across the country saw their paid leave dwindle while the pandemic continued to rage, postal workers continued to protect and uphold our democracy by working tirelessly to sort and process ballots. That's why we support the Postal Service Improvement Act (H.R. 3077), which would streamline the sorting and tracking of mail-in ballots and provide for 12 weeks of paid parental leave.



On May 11th, 2021, Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney (D-NY), the Chairwoman of the Committee on Oversight and Reform, along with the Subcommittee on National Security Chairman Rep. Stephen F. Lynch (D-MA), and Committee Member Rep. Brenda Lawrence (D-MI), introduced the Postal Service Improvement Act. The bill would help the Postal Service more efficiently and effectively manage mail-in ballots in federal elections by requiring all mail-in ballots to include a Postal Service trackable barcode and other stylistic requirements to make ballots easier to sort and track. Also included in the Postal Service Improvement Act is a provision that would guarantee 12 weeks of paid parental leave to all USPS and Postal Regulatory Commission employees.

#### H.R. 3077

*If signed into law, this legislation would:*

- Require USPS to place a trackable barcode on all election ballots
- Ensure the inclusion of the Official Election Mail Logo on all election mail
- Support boards of elections and voters to track mail-in ballots
- Provide 12 weeks of paid parental leave for Postal Service employees
- Provide USPS with \$8 billion in funding to replace its old delivery fleet with electric vehicles and charging stations for both postal and consumer use.

In a hybrid business meeting on May 13<sup>th</sup>, the House Committee on Oversight and Reform amended H.R. 3077 and favorably reported to the House by roll call vote of 23-17. During the meeting, an amendment to the bill was approved that would provide \$8 billion in funding to make USPS a leader in electric vehicle infrastructure.

**While the Postal Service Improvement Act has stalled, Congress has made progress on the Postal Service Reform Act and the infrastructure bills, which include several of the provisions found in the Postal Service Improvement Act.**

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ISSUE #4

## INVESTING IN POSTAL INFRASTRUCTURE

### *Why it's Important, What's Standing in Our Way, and What We'll Gain*

In order to continue serving America, the Postal Service desperately needs investment in its infrastructure. Without significant new resources to upgrade its delivery fleet, facilities, and other infrastructure, USPS cannot maintain and grow the high-level of essential services the American people rely on from this vital public agency.

Amid a pandemic, postal workers continue to make exceptional efforts to support our nation's public health and economy by meeting the demand for home deliveries of food, medicine, and other essentials. Frontline postal workers have achieved this despite years of under-capitalization in USPS infrastructure. It's time to reverse course and invest in our public Postal Service.

#### What's preventing USPS from making necessary investments?

In 2006, Congress passed the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA) which required USPS to create a \$72 billion fund to pay for employee post-retirement health insurance more than 75 years into the future. The pre-funding mandate accounts for 88% of USPS's annual losses, siphons resources away from USPS operations, and prevents USPS from investing in cost-saving reliability enhancements in its infrastructure.

#### What's the Solution?

There is overwhelming bi-partisan agreement in Congress that **the pre-funding mandate must be repealed**. While a critical first step, even if it were repealed tomorrow, the effects of this failed policy would remain for years in the form of maintenance and capital improvements USPS has been unable to make. That's why we must also make crucial financial investments in our public Postal Service.

In the 116th Congress, **H.R. 2 The Moving Forward Act** was introduced and passed in the House and included \$25 billion in infrastructure funding to modernize the Postal Service per the request of a bi-partisan Postal Board of Governors.



Now, in the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress, we urge the introduction of similar bills. Although we pushed for \$25 Billion in funding for Postal Infrastructure, Congress has not yet made a decision on how much funding USPS will receive.

However, through our lobbying efforts, we have built a large amount of support for providing USPS with an electric fleet.

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## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

ISSUE #5

117<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS

### Protecting The Right to Organize (PRO) Act

According to a 2021 report from the Economic Policy Institute, as union membership declines, the share of income going to the top 10% skyrockets. In spite of this, during the pandemic, union workers had more job stability compared to non-union workers. Recognizing the importance of union membership and the security it provides, members of Congress introduced legislation increasing the access to unions in both the private and public sectors.

#### The Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act (H.R. 842 and S. 420)

was introduced in the House by Representative Bobby Scott (D-VA-03) as **H.R. 842** and in the Senate by Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) as **S. 420**. If signed into law, this bill would vastly improve workers' rights across the country, make it easier to join unions, and increase penalties on employers who knowingly violate workers' rights.

The PRO Act strengthens current federal laws allowing private-sector workers to organize and join a union, and allowing them to bargain for better wages and benefits. Not only does the bill empower workers to form a union, it also aids in completing the initial collective bargaining agreement.

America's lack of labor protections and decline in union density has resulted in soaring inequality--which has only been exacerbated by the ongoing pandemic. Outrageously, U.S. billionaires increased their wealth by 1.1 trillion dollars since the start of the COVID-19 crisis. At the same time, millions of workers lost their jobs and currently face food insecurity and eviction.

The bill also clarifies the right to strike and prohibits employers from permanently replacing striking employees and penalizes employers that violate workers' rights.

If passed, this bill would eliminate current "Right-to-Work" laws, and guarantee the right to union organizing and collective bargaining. Today, even in non-Right-to-Work states, union organizing campaigns are often met with severe push-back from employers and even illegal retaliation.

Regardless of skill level, race, gender, or political affiliation, access to a union increases workers' pay, secures benefits and safer worker conditions. The PRO Act will strengthen the rights of workers, increase the financial growth of the middle class, and create an avenue for better working environments.

**The PRO Act has already passed the House but is still pending before the Senate. APWU is continuing to press the Senators who have not yet cosponsored the bill, particularly in Virginia and Arizona, to join. To date, the bill has 47 cosponsors.**



A Chicago rally in favor of the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) in the Janus v. AFSCME case. Scott Olson/Getty Images

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## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

ISSUE #6

117<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS

### APWU Urges Congress to Pass Landmark Voting Rights Legislation and Expand Voting Rights

The American Postal Workers Union proudly believes that every citizen can and should exercise their right to vote in every election. Unfortunately, it's no secret that voter suppression tactics have been used repeatedly in American elections. As much as we'd like to believe we've come a long way from the days of poll taxes and literacy tests, in reality, these voter suppression tactics persist today in different forms.

Historically, the most marginalized and disenfranchised among us are most likely to be victims of voter suppression. Common voter suppression tactics include making it difficult and confusing to register to vote, implementing voter ID laws, changing polling place hours and locations, closing polling places, maintaining inaccessible polling places, purging voter rolls, and gerrymandering. The fact that we presently have a patchwork of voting and election laws across the country is a form of voter suppression itself.



### Voting Rights In The 2020 Election For The People Act

In the midst of an election year and pandemic, millions of voters were able to exercise their right to vote by casting their ballots by mail. Vote-by-mail was previously not an option for many voters, but, because of the pandemic, some states made changes to voting laws and allowed voters to mail in their ballots instead. Even while states expanded vote-by-mail, some states put in place cumbersome rules, like requiring notarized ballots and witness signatures.

Even though voting by mail became an option for millions of Americans, the fact that it was implemented so haphazardly is not right. The truth of the matter is that all Americans--and our democracy--suffers as a result of our patchwork voting laws. That's why we need to standardize voting laws and make sure that Americans can confidently, safely, and easily exercise their right to vote.

Right now, we're witnessing heinous attempts by GOP state legislatures to restrict voting rights. We cannot allow them to succeed. We are long overdue for meaningful voting rights legislation at the national level. It's time for Congress to pass the For the People Act (H.R. 1/S. 1), which promises to protect and expand both our democracy and our voting rights.

**The 'For the People Act,' sponsored by John Sarbanes, [D-MD-03], was introduced in the House of Representatives on January 4th, 2021.** The bill is primarily concerned with improving voter access and election security and provides for long overdue campaign finance reform. H.R. 1 had previously passed in the House in 2019, but the legislation was not taken up by the Senate. **On March 3<sup>rd</sup>, the For the People Act of 2021 passed the House and has been sent to the Senate. In the Senate, APWU is continuing to press the Senators who have not yet cosponsored the bill, particularly in West Virginia.**

**If signed into law, this legislation would:**

- Expand voter registration by allowing for automatic and same-day registration
- Expand and enhance absentee voting
- Expand voting access by allowing for vote-by-mail and early voting
- Restore full voting rights to those who have completed felony sentences
- Reduce long lines and wait times for voters
- Limits purging voters from voter rolls

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UPDATED: OCTOBER 2021



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Mark Dimondstein, President  
Judy Beard, Legislative & Political Director  
Nancy Olumekor, Retirees Director



## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

ISSUE #7

117<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS

### APWU Supports Fair Benefits for America's Seniors

America's seniors have earned their benefits. The sad truth remains that, despite their contributions, current provisions and calculations have placed an undue amount of financial burden on those who already paid their fair share into the system.

APWU supports the expansion of Seniors benefits, with fair increases to Social Security, Cost of Living Adjustments based on calculations that adequately takes into consideration the spending habits of seniors, and the repeal of predatory provisions which penalize those who paid their fair share into Social Security.

### Social Security Fairness Act of 2021 (H.R. 82 / S. 1302)

Lead Sponsors: Rep. Rodney Davis (D-IL-13) and Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH)

The Social Security Fairness Act of 2021 was introduced in the House on January 4<sup>th</sup>, and referred to the Committee on Ways and Means. The bill was re-introduced in the Senate on April 22<sup>nd</sup> and referred to the Committee on Finance.

#### If passed, this bill would:

- Repeal the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provisions (WEP).
  - ✧ The GPO reduces Social Security benefits to spouses or widows by two-thirds if they are currently receiving a retirement or disability pension based on prior employment, during which they did not pay into Social Security.
  - ✧ The WEP affects those who receive a pension from employment where they did not pay into Social Security but did qualify for Social Security benefits from other employment.

Unfairly, these two provisions penalize individuals for their previous employment under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS), even though they met the requirements for Social Security benefits.

The bill currently has 228 co-sponsors in the House, and 35 co-sponsors in the Senate. If passed, these amendments will be made starting December 2021.

### APWU Retiree Activism



View our commercial featuring long-time APWU Retiree Byron Denton on the APWU website!  
<https://www.apwu.org/apwu-ol-timer-support-postal-workers-and-public-us-postal-service>

*Byron Denton, retired postal worker, age 92*

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## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

ISSUE #8

117<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS

### The Fight for \$15: Raise the Wage

Since the 2008 Recession, 99% of all new income has gone to the wealthiest one percent of Americans. All the while, the working class continues to fall further behind as income inequality explodes and wages stagnate.

American wages, and especially the federal minimum wage, remain outrageously low. At the current federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, a full-time worker earns only \$15,080 each year. There is no place in the U.S. where a full-time salary at the current federal minimum wage can provide for housing, food and other essentials. America needs to do better.

#### A Rising Tide

Throughout the 20th Century, rising wages have lifted up the working class and our nation as a whole. However, in recent decades, as the American economy has expanded and workers produce more and more, the federal minimum wage has fallen drastically behind increases in workers' productivity. Furthermore, the federal minimum wage has remained stagnant as the cost of living has increased annually, making it immensely difficult for low wage workers to provide for their families.

An increase in the minimum wage will lift millions of workers out of poverty and provide a boon to our economy.

There is broad support nationwide for raising the wage. A majority of surveyed Americans support a \$15 an hour minimum wage. 29 states and the District of Columbia have minimum wages above the federal \$7.25 threshold. Several states and cities are leading the way, implementing their own \$15 an hour minimum wage.

The rising tide of higher pay is also lifting businesses in these communities. Commenting on his increased sales after Seattle raised its minimum wage, a local entrepreneur stated, "It isn't because I'm such a great manager or smart guy, but the buying public has more money in their pocket."



#### A Crisis for Essential Workers

When the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted life in the United States in early 2020, essential workers were expected to do their jobs with inadequate pay and weak workplace protections. Many of those essential workers are minimum and low-wage earners, which includes fast-food workers, waitstaff, and those who work in residential/nursing care facilities.

We are long-overdue for an increase in the federal minimum wage. America's working class deserves living wages, not starvation wages. With the passage of the bill, over 10% of Americans would see an increase in pay, lifting 1.3 million Americans out of poverty and, in turn, reducing racial and gender pay inequality. Once enacted, this translates to a pay increase of \$3,300 for the average worker.

#### Raise the Wage Act of 2021 (H.R. 603/S. 53)

The Raise the Wage Act of 2021, introduced by Representative Bobby Scott (D-VA-03) in the House and Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) in the Senate, would incrementally raise the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2025. Further, it would then be indexed to rise with inflation to prevent low wage workers from falling behind as they have in recent decades. Tip workers would be paid at least the baseline minimum wage and phase out the sub-minimum wage for tipped workers (currently at \$2.13/hr). This would ensure consistent pay from employers without eliminating tips from patrons.

**The Raise the Wage Act of 2021 has amassed 199 sponsors in the House and 38 sponsors in the Senate.**

**The APWU endorses the Raise the Wage Act of 2021 (H.R. 603/S. 53) and encourages lawmakers on both sides of the aisle to stand up for America's working class by cosponsoring this important legislation.**

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## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

ISSUE #9

117<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS

### APWU Supports the USPS Fairness Act

For over a decade, the United States Postal Service has been plagued with the onerous burden of pre-funding its retiree health care benefits, mandated by the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA) of 2006. The Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) found that the mandate requires the Postal Service to prefund its retiree health care benefits more than 50 years in advance, paying for retirement health care for individuals who have not entered the workforce and even for those who have not been born yet.

The pre-funding mandate is accountable for 84 percent of the Postal Service's net losses since 2007 and is a constant threat to the financial sustainability of the Postal Service. The Postal Service has defaulted on its pre-funding payments since 2012. No other federal agency or private sector business prefunds its retirement benefits.

The uncertainty inherent in satisfying the PAEA pre-funding mandate is creating real instability in the Postal Service's operations and prevents investment in infrastructure. The postal employees we represent see the consequences of this instability in their work, their workplaces, and in the service they provide the public.



### The USPS Fairness Act (S. 145 and H.R. 695)

Recognizing the problem pre-funding creates, the USPS Fairness Act enjoyed overwhelming bi-partisan support in the last Congress and passed the House with 309 votes; however, it did not make it to the Senate floor. As such, the USPS Fairness Act has been reintroduced for the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress in both chambers as S. 145 and H.R. 695.

#### S. 145

Senators Steve Daines (R-MT) and Brian Schatz (D-HI) introduced the Senate version of the USPS Fairness Act, S. 145 on February 1<sup>st</sup>.

#### H.R. 695

The House version of the USPS Fairness Act, H.R. 695, was introduced on February 2<sup>nd</sup> by Representatives Peter DeFazio (D-OR-04) and Tom Reed (R-NY-23), along with over 220 original co-sponsors.

If signed into law, this legislation would fully repeal the pre-funding mandate, reverting back to a pay-as-you-go system that the Postal Service used prior to the PAEA.

By repealing the pre-funding mandate, the Postal Service would then be able to focus on investing and innovating services in order to better meet its mission to service every American household and business.

The bill has yet to move forward in either chamber of Congress. However, the USPS Fairness Act has been included as a central provision in the Postal Reform Act, which has been introduced in both the House and Senate, and marked in the House Committee on Oversight and Reform. APWU's Legislative and Political Department will continue to push for the passage of this long overdue measure both as a standalone bill and as a provision within postal reform.

**"The bi-partisan USPS Fairness Act is one of the first steps toward returning the Postal Service to solid financial footing, and I urge Congress to quickly pass this critical legislation," said President Mark Dimondstein.**

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APWU Legislative Hotline: 844-402-1001



## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

ISSUE #10

117<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS

### Universal Healthcare: A Basic Human Right

APWU supports Medicare for All, which would guarantee the right of healthcare to all.

The American healthcare system is profoundly broken. Today, amid the COVID-19 crisis, nearly 100 million people lack health insurance or cannot afford their deductibles or co-pays. As millions of people lost their jobs during the pandemic, so too did they lose their health insurance directly tied to employment. The ongoing public health crisis has only laid bare the cruelty of our healthcare system, which has killed over half a million Americans and left millions more without healthcare.

America's for-profit healthcare system has been broken long before the pandemic. In 2019, we spent \$3.8 trillion on healthcare--for more than countries with a universal healthcare system, like Canada, Germany, and the Netherlands. Even though we spend significantly more on healthcare than any developed nation, Americans have some of the worst health outcomes of those nations. At the same time, medical debt is the leading cause of bankruptcy in America. That is outrageous. Congress must act to guarantee healthcare coverage for all and implement a single-payer, Medicare-For-All system.

Countries that guarantee health care as a human right do so through a "single payer" system, which replaces the thousands of for-profit health insurance companies with a public, universal plan. Implementing a single-payer Medicare-For-All system will significantly improve healthcare outcomes and, also, will

potentially save us \$1.1 trillion by reducing senseless and excessive insurance-related administrative costs. The United States is the only country in the developed world that does not guarantee access to basic health care for residents. It is time for this to change. The APWU adopted a Medicare for All resolution at the 2018 National Convention because we believe healthcare is a human right.

By implementing a system under which all healthcare revenue goes into a single public fund that pays for all medical services, a single-payer system would:

- Guarantee the same coverage for all, regardless of employment status or wealth
- End healthcare-related personal bankruptcies
- Improve public health
- Reduce healthcare spending

The APWU is proud to stand with the Labor Campaign for Single Payer and has long supported a shift away from the private health insurance market to a government-run program.

The APWU will continue to support legislation that provides affordable and adequate single-payer healthcare coverage for all.

### The Medicare for All Act of 2021 (H.R. 1976)

Sponsored by Representatives Pramila Jayapal (WA-07) and Debbie Dingell (MI-12)

APWU urges members of Congress to stand up for universal healthcare and co-sponsor important legislation to cover all Americans. Representatives Pramila Jayapal and Debbie Dingell introduced the Medicare for All Act of 2021 in the House on March 17, 2021 and has been referred to committee. An identical bill has yet to be introduced in the Senate. The goal of this bill is to ensure that all Americans will have access to the highest quality and most cost-effective healthcare services regardless of their employment, income, or healthcare status. In short, this bill would codify into law the moral truth that healthcare is a human right. If signed into law, the bill would:

- Guarantee quality healthcare for all Americans through expanded Medicare program.
- Provide comprehensive health care coverage including all primary care, hospital and outpatient services, dental, vision, audiology, women's reproductive health services, maternity and newborn care, long-term services and supports, prescription drugs, mental health and substance abuse treatment, laboratory and diagnostic services, ambulatory services, and more.
- Ensure that, upon receiving care, patients would not be charged any co-pays or other out-of-pocket costs.
- Allow Medicare to negotiate drug prices to substantially lower the costs of prescriptions drugs.
- Preserve the ability of veterans to receive their medical benefits and services through the Veterans Administration, and of Native Americans to receive their medical benefits and services through the Indian Health Service.

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UPDATED: OCTOBER 2021



# American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

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## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

ISSUE #11

117<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS

### APWU Urges Congress to Prohibit Anti-LGBTQ+ Discrimination **PASS THE EQUALITY ACT**

The American Postal Workers Union stands in solidarity with our LGBTQ+ family across the country, who continue to face attacks on their fundamental human rights. A lack of protections for LGBTQ+ individuals threatens their access to healthcare, housing, education, and safety. Everyone should be able to live free from violence and be able to access necessities without fear of refusal based on who they are or who they love. This country is long overdue for comprehensive federal non-discrimination laws, and that's why APWU supports passage of the Equality Act.

Today, we have a confusing and arcane patchwork of state non-discrimination laws and no federal anti-discrimination, which leaves millions of individuals vulnerable to potential discrimination. Right now, conservative state legislatures are working to codify anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination. This disgusting effort jeopardizes the safety and wellbeing of LGBTQ+ individuals across the country. We cannot allow that to happen. We must pass the Equality Act in the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress.



### The Equality Act (H.R. 5 & S. 393)

**Sponsored by Representative David Cicilline (RI-01) and  
Senators Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Tommy Baldwin (D-WI) and Cory Booker (D-NJ)**

**The Equality Act was introduced in the House on February 18<sup>th</sup> by Representative David Cicilline, and introduced in the Senate on February 23<sup>rd</sup> by Senators Jeff Merkley, Tammy Baldwin and Cory Booker.**

APWU urges members of Congress to stand in solidarity with LGBTQ+ citizens and co-sponsor important legislation to protect human rights. The passage of this bill will establish permanent protections **against discrimination based on an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity** across key areas such as employment, housing, credit, federally funded programs, and education.

**The Equality Act passed in the House on February 25, 2021 with a bipartisan vote of 224 - 206, and has amassed 48 co-sponsors in the Senate.**

Some highlights of the bill are:

- Prohibits discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity in public establishments such as stadiums/exhibition spaces, recreational rooms, exercise spaces, amusement parks, public gatherings or displays
- Protects against discrimination at establishments that provide goods, services or programs such as a store
- Protects against discrimination at any transportation **services including ride shares** and public transit
- Allows the Department of Justice to intervene in equal protection actions in federal court
- Prohibits an individual from being denied access to a shared facility, including **a restroom**, locker room and dressing room that is in accordance with the individual's gender identity.

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## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

ISSUE #12

117<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS

### APWU Supports Women In The Workplace

During the COVID-19 pandemic, women and women of color have disproportionately faced unemployment. Women were more likely to be laid off than men, take on caretaker roles as family members fell ill and children attended school online, and take on additional responsibilities at home. As our country reopens and COVID-19 restrictions ease, the pandemic could leave a lingering negative impact on women's wages. The American Postal Workers Union firmly believes in equal pay for equal work, and we will do everything in our power to close the gender pay gap.

Even before the pandemic, women across the country didn't make as much as their male counterparts. The gender pay gap is wider for women of color, who are more likely to be breadwinners than white women. In 2021, the overall gender pay gap persists: women earn 82 cents for every dollar earned by men. Not only does this impact women's financial security, but also their family's. Before the pandemic, 2/3 of working mothers were either breadwinners or co-breadwinners for their households.

When women are denied the wages they deserve, families across the country struggle to save for retirement, can't invest in their children's education, and are forced to live paycheck to paycheck.

Addressing this immense inequality, Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro (D-CT-03) and Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) introduced the Paycheck Fairness Act (H.R. 7/S. 205). These bills would strengthen the Equal Pay Act of 1963 (P.L. 88-38), strengthening women's earning power.

### Paycheck Fairness Act

#### H.R. 7 and S. 205

Sponsored by Rep. Rosa DeLauro (CT-03) and Sen. Patty Murray (WA)

This bill would:

- Allow women to challenge pay discrimination and ban retaliation against those who discuss their wages;
- Require employers to prove pay disparities exist due to skill level and merit, not because of gender;
- Limit the influence of a potential employee's current salary on her future salary;
- Establish a program through the Department of Labor (DOL) to train women on negotiating skills;
- Create studies through the DOL and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission on pay disparity and discrimination; and,
- Provide tools to the DOL to help women understand and combat wage discrimination.

On January 28th, H.R. 7 was introduced and passed the House with bipartisan support. but S. 205 was filibustered in the Senate. The bill can be reconsidered if the filibuster is reformed or if Senate leaders believe there are enough votes to end the filibuster (60).

APWU understands the inherent value in securing equal pay for women. Not only will it support individual women, but it will also support communities, the national economy, and future employees in all occupations and industries.



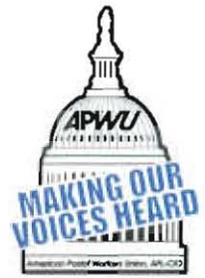
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## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

ISSUE #13

117<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS

### The USPS Shipping Equity Act: H.R. 3287/S. 1163

Private carriers, such as UPS and FedEx, are already able to ship beer, alcohol and wine direct to consumers. In 2018, private carriers reported a revenue of over \$3 billion from delivering for wineries, breweries, and other producers. While private carriers are able to ship alcohol, due to outdated Prohibition Era regulations, it is currently illegal for the Postal Service to ship these products. It's time we lift this band and enable the public Postal Service to realize the opportunity to increase revenue and expand on demanded services.



#### Lifting the Prohibition

On Monday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, Representatives Jackie Speier (D-CA-14) and Don Newhouse (R-WA-04), along with Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR) introduced the United States Postal Service (USPS) Shipping Equity Act. It has omissed 31 co-sponsors in the House and 2 in the Senate.

"In 2019, California wineries shipped 275.6 million cases of wine, yet consumers and manufacturers are prohibited from using the U.S. Postal Service to ship or deliver these everyday products. In most states, private carriers such as FedEx and UPS are already delivering alcoholic beverages. It makes no sense to create a competitive disadvantage for the USPS by barring them from these kinds of shipments, especially given the Postal Service's dire financial condition.

The time is long overdue for Congress to lift this Prohibition-era ban for the benefit of beverage manufacturers, consumers, and our struggling postal service."

~ Representative Jackie Speier

#### The USPS Shipping Equity Act

Under this bipartisan legislation, the prohibition of the Postal Service shipping alcohol would be fully removed, while setting up regulations which would require:

- Shippers to register with the Department of Treasury, the federal regulator of alcohol;
- Recipients to be 21 or older, with possession o a valid government-issued ID shown at time of delivery; and,
- The Postal Service to comply with state and local laws in force at the point of delivery.

Not only does this legislation level the playing field between the Postal Service and private carriers, but it also provides equal access to all customers.

The Postal Service can reach more customers than its private carrier counterparts and delivers to every address—regardless of geographic location. Under this bill, people in rural areas, who would otherwise see exorbitant shipping fees or no shipping options at all, will have access to direct-to-consumer shipping of beer and wine with this bill.

As the Postal Service looks for ways to innovate and diversify services, delivering wine, beer, and spirits is a clear way for USPS to offer competitive service as well as bring in millions of dollars.

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## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

ISSUE #14

117<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS

### Send Privatizers in Congress a Message: The U.S. Mail Is Not For Sale!

In the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress, there are still elected officials who would privatize the Postal Service if they had their way. Though the threat of privatization is not quite as imminent as it was under the previous administration, the threat has not disappeared.

Under the previous administration, attempts to privatize the Postal Service came from the highest levels of government. The White House Office of Management and Budget issued a restructuring plan for the Federal Government in 2018, which directly called for the privatization of the Postal Service. The proposal had language posing to "restructure the U.S. Postal Service" and "prepare it for future conversion from a Government agency into a privately-held corporation."

Last summer, amid a pandemic and ahead of a presidential election, USPS developed policies, changed work rules, and implemented procedures that harmed service. Slowing down the mail has degraded the service USPS provides, causing people to rely increasingly on private companies to send packages, pay bills, and receive medication. Many opponents of the Postal Service in Congress and in the corporate arena want to respond to the degradation of service, not by supporting improvements to USPS, but by pushing for privatizing.

Thanks to our U.S. Mail Not For Sale campaign, we successfully fought off efforts to privatize our public Postal Service last year. Unfortunately, these weren't the first attempts to privatize the Postal Service, and they certainly won't be the last.



#### House Resolution 47 (Introduced on January 13, 2021)

The resolution, sponsored by Rep. Stephen Lynch, has 175 sponsors in the House. If passed, the resolution would express the House's support for taking all appropriate measures to ensure that the United States Postal Service remains an independent establishment of the Federal Government and is not subject to privatization. Representatives Lynch and Davis introduced a version of this resolution last Congress.

The threats of postal privatization, the threats to decent union jobs, and the threats to reliable services are genuine and ever-evolving. Though the current White House administration is not hostile to the Postal Service, that doesn't mean that certain members of Congress, corporations, and private interests will relax their efforts to pursue postal privatization. The 117<sup>th</sup> Congress should do everything in its power to protect against current and future privatization efforts and pass H.Res. 47.

**The American Postal Workers Union stands with the people of this country and our many allies in the ongoing fight to ensure a vibrant public Postal Service for generations to come.**

#### What Does Privatization Mean?

- Privatization means the end of our publicly owned and operated United States Postal Service, to be replaced in part or whole by private corporate interests.
- Privatization means the elimination of our jobs with all of our negotiated benefits. Further, it jeopardizes the future of our hard-earned retirement and healthcare benefits.

#### The Stakes

Privatizing the Postal Service and eliminating its Universal Service mandate that is enshrined in the U.S. Constitution, will have a very real and very negative impact on those who depend on affordable, reliable mail delivery. It means service cuts for millions of Americans, particularly those in rural areas and inner cities. Privatization means hiked postage rates and the end of timely service and door delivery.

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UPDATED: OCTOBER 2021





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## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

ISSUE #15

117<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS

### House Representatives Feel Strong About Improving Mail Services for Homes & Businesses

The United States Postal Service (USPS) is a national treasure, enshrined in the Constitution and supported by the American people. Without any taxpayer funding, the USPS serves 161.4 million households and businesses each day. This country depends on the postal service to "bind the nation together," connecting people and businesses in numerous ways - collecting, sorting, and delivering medicine, health information, financial and legal transactions, census forms, election mail, greeting cards, letters, periodicals, pension and stimulus checks, and e-commerce packages.

The postal service has a universal service obligation to provide the nation with affordable, universal mail service to all. However, chronic underinvestment and efforts to privatize the postal service threaten USPS' ability to carry out its universal service obligation. That's why we must fight off attempts to further degrade service and secure reforms which will improve service standards and mail delivery.

Congress urgently needs to pass measures to ensure quality mail delivery by restoring service standards to 2012 levels and ensuring the continuation of door delivery and ensure 6-day delivery.

#### House Resolution 119

If passed, H.Res. 119 would express the House's support of USPS taking all appropriate measures to restore its 2012 service standards.

**Lead Sponsor:**

Rep. David McKinley (D-WV-01)  
Currently has 124 co-sponsors.

**Why is this resolution important?**

- Prompt and reliable nationwide mail service is critical to retaining business, growing business and satisfying customers.
- Delayed mail will continue to drive business away from USPS and to its competitors.
- By requiring the mail to be transported further distances, USPS's mail slowdown plan has increased transportation costs and has sometimes caused the agency to lose money. It's vital we reverse course.
- E-commerce operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week; the USPS should be using its unique network to increase services to businesses and residential customers to accommodate the changing world we live in.

#### House Resolution 109

If passed, H.Res. 109 would express the House's support of USPS taking all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of door delivery for all business and residential customers.

**Lead Sponsor:**

Rep. Stephanie Murphy (D-FL-07)  
Currently has 149 co-sponsors.

**Why is this resolution important?**

- Converting existing door-delivery to centralized delivery points is wildly unpopular among small business and residential delivery customers.
- The USPS' brand is its best asset; that brand is trusted by the American people at their door and inside their businesses, not at a neighborhood cluster box.
- Revenue is generated everyday by Letter Carriers who connect with business owners and other customers at the door.

**Ask your member of Congress how they fight to improve service standards and mail delivery.**

#### House Resolution 114

If passed, H.Res. 114 would express the House's support of USPS taking all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of its 6-day mail delivery service.

**Lead Sponsor:**

Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-VA-11)  
Currently has 153 co-sponsors.

**Why is this resolution important?**

- Eliminating Saturday delivery will drive business and revenue away. Many mailers target Saturday delivery, sending coupons and circulars to be used over the weekend.
- USPS provides affordable last-mile delivery for UPS, FedEx and Amazon to every delivery point in the country, partnerships that have been extremely successful. Without Saturday delivery these companies will find alternate, more expensive means of delivery.
- The Postal Service is delivering in some places 7-days a week and is offering same-day delivery through partnerships. Eliminating Saturday delivery is counterproductive to the thriving e-commerce business the Postal Service is part of.

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## LOBBYING TIPS

ISSUE #16

117<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS

**Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the nature of lobbying has changed.** Instead of speaking with lawmakers and staff in the hallways and offices of Congress or scheduling in-person meetings, we've had to rely increasingly on phone calls, videoconferencing, emails, and letters. Though the way we advocate for the issues important to us has changed, as always, we'll continue to make our voices heard. Our tips below can help you be successful when reaching out to your representatives.

1. Know your legislator. Know what committees they sit on and where they stand (or how they previously voted) on APWU's issues.
2. Understand that the ongoing pandemic has impacted legislators' operations. Some lawmakers may be accepting in-person meetings, virtual meetings, or some combination of the two.
3. Arrive early for your appointment. For virtual meetings, if there are technical difficulties or you have trouble jumping on the call, getting on the call earlier will give you time to troubleshoot issues or request a new meeting link. As lawmakers and their staff are extremely busy and may only give you 10-15 minutes, it's best to arrive early to avoid an even shorter meeting or missing it altogether.
4. Know your issues and have the facts handy. This puts you in a better position to make an ask such as requesting they become a co-sponsor on a bill or resolution that we support, make a vote in committee or on the floor in favor of a bill or amendment, or (if they have already supported our issues and taken those actions) ask them to contact another key member whose support we need.
5. If there is more than one APWU member attending the meeting, coordinate beforehand. If it is a virtual meeting, make sure all attendees have the video conferencing link.

As for messaging, one person can open the meeting, one person can tell a relevant story, one person can make the ask, etc.

6. If video conferencing, be courteous and make sure you're muted if not speaking as to avoid distractions and background noise.
7. Be respectful of their time, but make sure you make the ask before your meeting ends. If you don't ask them specifically to support something, they have an "out".
8. Be prepared to email a copy of information outlining why you support or oppose particular legislation to your legislator or their staff.
9. Use real life, local examples. Every member of Congress responds better to their constituents. Tell a story that hits home for them. For example, "in my neighborhood, the store owners are very frustrated about their advertised sales arriving in people's mailboxes after the sales have finished. We need to return our service standards back to 2012 levels."
10. Be sure to collect contact information from staff. Follow up within a week of your meeting with a note thanking them for taking the time to meet with you.

When making calls or attending virtual meetings, don't forget to take pictures and send them to [legislative@apwu.org](mailto:legislative@apwu.org)

### Contacting your Member of Congress is Easy

With the Legislative hotline (844) 402-1001, it's now simpler than ever to call and make an appointment with your representative in Congress. If you look on the back of your APWU membership card, the Legislative hotline number is also printed there so it can always be handy. When you call, you can provide your ZIP Code and be transferred directly to your lawmaker's office.

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