

The Honorable Tom Rooney
335 SE Ocean Boulevard
Stuart, FL 34994

April 6, 2010

Dear Congressman Rooney:

My name is Kevin Byrne. I am the Legislative Liaison for the National Association of Letter Carriers for the 16th District. I had hoped to meet with you while you were here in Florida during the Easter recess but your schedule did not permit it on such short notice. Therefore, I write today to discuss the plans of the United States Postal Service to discontinue six day delivery and move to delivery on only five days.

One of the defining characteristics of the U.S. Postal Service is its policy of nation-wide uniform pricing with six-day delivery. Competitors either don't deliver or charge high premiums for Saturday delivery while the USPS provides affordable universal service as mandated by the Constitution.

Business in the United States is conducted six days—and in many sectors seven days—per week. Small and large businesses alike, from individual entrepreneurs to large-scale financial firms, rely on the delivery of the mail six days per week to operate successfully. Saturday delivery is especially important to growing companies like eBay, Netflix and Caremark, and has long been vital for news magazines. The elimination of Saturday delivery will make the USPS less valuable to business and accelerate electronic substitution.

Billions of prescriptions are delivered through the mail each year—a two-day delay in their delivery would seriously inconvenience senior citizens and others. Delayed delivery of payments, subscriptions and food products would adversely affect millions of households.

Americans living in rural areas where the Postal Service's competitors do not deliver or where broadband is not available rely especially on six-day USPS delivery and would be adversely affected

The elimination of six-day delivery would hurt business and consumer interests while costing tens of thousands of jobs.

Congress should first address what foremost has set the Postal Service ablaze: the crippling \$55 billion in payments Congress has required the Postal Service to make through 2016 for its future retiree health benefits. While benefit pre-funding wisely assures that assets will be available to satisfy obligations down the road, no other federal or private-sector enterprise is required or committed to retiree health benefit pre-funding on so aggressive a schedule. This requirement is particularly burdensome during a recession. In fact, if not for the nearly \$8 billion in current and future retiree health payments the Postal Service will make once again this year, the agency would likely remain in the black. This problem was brought to your attention last year when you voted in favor of H.R. 22 which did provide one year of relief from this pre-funding obligation.

As I am sure you are aware, studies conducted by the Office of the Inspector General of the Postal Service (OIG) and the Postal Regulatory Commission have shown that the "postal surplus" in the CSRS pension fund, which was transferred to the retiree health fund in 2007, was grossly undervalued by OPM. As a result, USPS was shortchanged by as much as \$75 billion when the PSRHBF was created.

Postmaster General John Potter testified before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government on March 18, 2010 on this matter. During that hearing, responding to questions from Chairman Sen. Richard Durbin, Potter said that returning that \$75 billion in Civil Service retirement funds owed to the Postal Service would eliminate any need to cut mail service!

It's not only the future of mail that is at stake. It's also the \$1.2 trillion-a-year mailing industry that's responsible for 8.3 million jobs and nearly 9 percent of the nation's GDP.

Thank you in advance for giving this matter due consideration. I look forward to hearing from you or your representative to learn your position on this vital issue.

Respectfully yours,

Kevin J Byrne
Congressional District Liaison, FL-16
National Association of Letter Carriers, Branch 1690
1840 Alice Avenue
West Palm Beach, FL 33406

Home address:

256 SE Todd Avenue
Port Saint Lucie, Florida 34983-3137