



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POSTAL SUPERVISORS

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June 14, 2007

The Honorable Tom Harkin
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Endorsement of "The Mail Delivery Protection Act of 2007" (S. 1457)

Dear Senator Harkin:

On behalf of the 35,000 members of the National Association of Postal Supervisors, I write to endorse "The Mail Delivery Protection Act of 2007" (S. 1457) and to extend our gratitude for your leadership in assuring that the Postal Service continues to rely primarily upon its employee carriers for the delivery of mail.

I strongly share your concerns about the merits of privatizing mail delivery service. Your legislation, which would forbid the Postal Service from entering into any contract with individuals and firms for the delivery of mail on any route with one or more families per mile, is fundamentally necessary. While recent enactment of the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act, P.L. 109-435, provides added authority and flexibility to the Postal Service to become more business-like and entrepreneurial, the law also requires the assurance of continued reliability and service quality, outcomes that are best performed through the use of experienced, dedicated employee mail carriers. Surveys have shown that the American people continually regard the United States Postal Service as one of the most highly trusted governmental institutions. How and why did that confidence come about? Largely because of the experienced and time-tested reliability of the Postal Service's career workforce in receiving, processing and delivering millions of pieces of mail every day. Contracting out delivery service threatens to undermine the confidence of the American people and the integrity of the postal system itself. It also raises significant questions about the ability of the Postal Service to prevent, investigate, and prosecute mail theft, mail fraud, and other illegal uses of the mail. These concerns are not speculative ones; they are legitimate reservations based upon documented and unsatisfactory experience by the Postal Service in its use of contracted delivery contractors on existing routes.

Representing supervisors, managers and postmasters in the United States Postal Service

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As a leader of postal managers and supervisors who bear the responsibility for managing delivery contractors, I have especially strong concerns. The experience of some managers in the supervision of existing contract carriers has been unfavorable. Contracting out in some cases has resulted in the responsibility for mail delivery ultimately falling to supervisors themselves, because of the failure of contracted carriers to arrive for work or to satisfactorily complete their contracted responsibilities. These circumstances have placed unnecessary and unwarranted burdens upon postal supervisors, ones that rarely arose when USPS employee carriers were performing deliveries.

While the business case for contracting out may appear initially attractive, the real costs of contracting out far outweigh the benefits. The costs to the Postal Service in the degradation of service quality and reliability ultimately are greater than the savings achieved. For these reasons, the National Association of Postal Supervisors is opposed to the further contracting out of postal delivery service. In view of recently-announced Postal Service plans to expand Contract Delivery Service operations, your legislation is absolutely warranted and necessary.

Sincerely yours,


Ted Keating
President