NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION:
U.S. MAIL NOT FOR SALE!

Thousands of postal workers and their allies rallied in over a hundred congressional districts on October 8th, protesting the Trump administration’s proposal to privatize the U.S. Postal Service. The four postal unions — American Postal Workers Union, National Association of Letter Carriers, National Postal Mail Handlers Union, and the National Rural Letter Carriers Association — called the action, which was supported by A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service (over eighty labor, community and faith organizations).

Within months after establishing a “taskforce” to study the postal service, the White House issued a wide-ranging proposal to “reform and reorganize” the federal government. Within the June 21st proposal—“Delivering Government Solutions in the 21st Century” — was a signal to the “taskforce” that the USPS should be privatized, with a reduced obligation to provide universal service. Among the recommendations were fewer days of delivery, elimination of door and curbside delivery, sale and closure of post offices and processing plants, plus reduction in labor costs. “A privatized Postal Service would have a substantially lower cost structure… The private operation would be incentivized to innovate and improve services to Americans in every community,” says the White House proposal.

Postmaster General Megan Brennan’s response was surprisingly non-committal. “Ultimately, it will be for Congress to decide whether the best path to financial sustainability is to preserve the Postal Service status as a government institution focused on our mission of public service, while giving us more authority to meet our responsibilities, or whether a profit-maximizing corporate model is preferable,” Brennan said.

The “taskforce” was set to report its recommendations to President Trump on August 10. However, after widespread condemnation and mass mobilizations opposing privatization, the report has been postponed indefinitely.

Meanwhile, over half the House of Representatives and nearly half the Senate have signed onto resolutions “expressing the sense of the [body] that Congress should take 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. “ (House Resolution 993 & Senate Resolution 633)

THE BRONX DEMANDS
Postal Banking

(excerpted from News12 & APWU News)

Local leaders gathered at the Hunts Point post office to advocate for postal banking.

The group was at the office as they attempted to drop off a petition to reinstate banking services. Up until the mid-1960s, if someone wanted to drop off a letter there, they could also go inside and drop off money to deposit too.

Since then, post offices have only offered limited financial services like money orders and U.S. Treasury check cashing.

One post office worker says a post office offers a more secure and trusted place to go for those services. The 42-year post office veteran helped collect 5,000 signatures for the proposal.

A USPS representative said in part in a statement, "The Postal Service's mission is to provide the American public with trusted, affordable, universal mail service. Our core function is delivery, not banking."

Advocates say they will keep working for postal banking. An astounding 52.3 percent of Bronx households are underserved by traditional Wall Street banks. These residents either have no bank account or have an account and use “alternative” financial services including paycheck cashing and pawn shops.

All four Congressional representatives from the Bronx support the Campaign for Postal Banking. Sign the petition at www.campaignforpostalbanking.org/take-action/
**Richmond Carriers Protest After-Dark Delivery**
(excerpted from ABC8News, Oct. 15)

RICHMOND, Va. (WRIC) – Saturday morning United States Postal Workers were protesting along Brook Road, demanding an early start to their workday.

With signs in hand, employees were speaking out about their safety and the safety of their customers.

Employees tell 8News, right now they begin their day at 9 a.m., forcing them to deliver mail after the sun sets.

"We’re basically doing it for the safety," said letter carrier Robin Richardson. “The customers don’t want their mail this late and we don’t want to be out there this late.”

Richardson urges the public to reach out to local and federal officials to change their start times.

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**Understaffing Causes Filthy Conditions & Delays Mail in Albuquerque**
(excerpted from KOAT Action 7 News)

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. —"Bats, rats, and delayed mail is what we’re dealing with," Albuquerque Postal Workers Union President Ken Fajardo said. Union leaders say chronic understaffing problems are causing mail delays and filthy conditions at local offices.

Fajardo says the number of custodians on staff has been cut in half locally in the past eight years. Those positional cuts are leading to mold, pests, and dirty facilities. "We found bats in the postmaster’s office and just yesterday, over 12 bats flying around inside the main office," Fajardo said.

Fajardo claims the Phoenix district office is unfairly allocating resources to Arizonian post offices while taking away positions from New Mexico offices. The cuts are reportedly causing mail delays.

The union says Senator Martin Heinrich is expected to take a tour of the facilities on Thursday.

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**Boca Raton Saves Post Office**
(excerpted from Palm Beach Post)

BOCA RATON — A five-decade-old post office in downtown Boca Raton will not close and relocate, as was once the plan, after downtown residents and city officials pushed back against the effort.

When residents and business owners learned in March that the downtown post office might close, they urged officials reconsider, calling the post office “essential” to doing business downtown. More than 1,000 people signed a petition urging the U.S. Postal Service not to close or relocate the 8,500-square-foot post office, just south of Mizner Park outdoor retail-dining plaza.

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**Canadian Postal Workers Refuse All Overtime**
(excerpted from CanadaPostNews.com)

OTTAWA – Effective November 1st at 12:01 am, the Canadian Union of Postal Workers is calling a national overtime ban for both of its major bargaining units at Canada Post. Postal workers, no matter what their job at Canada Post, will not work more than an eight-hour day and not more than a 40-hour week.

Postal workers will refuse overtime, including letter carriers – who have experienced so much forced overtime that some of them are not used to seeing their families before dark.

“We’ve had it. Overburdening, overtime and overwork are all major issues in this round of bargaining. Until Canada Post negotiators address it, we can solve it for ourselves in the meantime.” said CUPW National President Mike Palecek. “This is a health and safety issue rooted in poor staffing. We refuse to be injured any longer by a management team that cares more about the bottom line than sky-rocketing injury rates.”

One of the expired collective agreements enabled Canada Post to give mandatory overtime to some postal workers, including letter carriers. Canada Post management has been driving up risks to workers’ physical and mental health by abusing that option. With the contract no longer in effect, postal workers have the right to refuse the overtime while demanding proper staffing and overtime procedures.

Rates of disabling injuries have been climbing, and postal workers are now the most injured group of workers in the federal sector, five times the average rate of the rest of federal sector, and more than double that of longshore workers, the next most frequently injured.