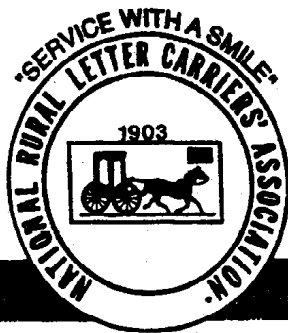
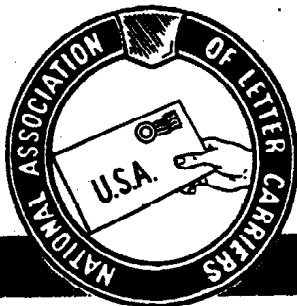


**National Association of
Letter Carriers**



**National Rural Letter
Carriers' Association**

100 Indiana Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20001-2144

1630 Duke St., Fourth Floor
Alexandria, VA 22314-3465

July 15, 2005

Dear

On behalf of the 340,000 men and women who deliver the nation's mail each day, whom we are privileged to represent, we write to urge you to support legislation now pending before Congress to reform the United States Postal Service. The future viability of the USPS, a vital public service to your constituents and an essential part of the nation's economic infrastructure, is at stake.

The U.S. Postal Service has served this country well for more than two centuries. It provides quality universal postal services at very affordable prices to every household and business in America, with deliveries six days a week to more than 143 million addresses. As the hub of a \$900 billion mailing industry, which includes, major mailers, printing firms, cataloguers and various e-commerce vendors, the Postal Service is also critically important to the health of the U.S. economy. That importance was demonstrated clearly in 1997 when United Parcel Service was hit by a crippling strike. Thanks to the Postal Service's universal delivery network, the strike's damage was minimal.

In order to permit the Postal Service to thrive in the Internet Age, however, Congress must give the USPS the tools to adapt as it has always adapted to the changing needs of the American people and the American economy. That is why the National Association of Letter Carriers and the National Rural Letter Carriers Association have worked with leaders in both parties in both houses of Congress to develop a broad bipartisan consensus on postal reform. While not perfect, we have supported H.R. 22 and S. 662, both entitled The Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2005. We urge you to do so as well.

The bills will permit the Postal Service greater flexibility to set its own prices within the context of a price index system of regulation (which will limit postage rate hikes) and allow it to responsibly fund its retirement obligations while streamlining the collective bargaining process by requiring mandatory mediation in cases where agreement is difficult to achieve.

Although some ideologically oriented interest groups have expressed opposition to postal reform (and distributed false and misleading information about it and the Postal Service while doing so), we believe that modernizing the USPS business model is too important to American businesses and to the American people to become a partisan issue. The continued viability of

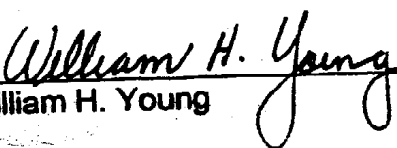
daily postal deliveries is just as important to the social and economic health of rural areas of the country as it is to urban and suburban areas, regardless of political and ideological differences between their representatives in Congress.

The real issue here is what will happen to the Postal Service and to the constituents you represent if we fail to take action now. The USPS's core business, letter mail, faces steady erosion as a result of electronic substitution – facilitated by e-mail and the Internet. At the same time, the infrastructure costs of the USPS continue to grow as some 1.8 million new households and businesses are created each year. In the absence of postal reform, service cuts will become inevitable and the USPS could be forced to reduce the frequency of delivery to low-income (both rural and urban) and low-density (rural) areas. Alternatively, the USPS might be forced to charge higher, differential rates for mail bound to such areas of the country. Either way, the negative impact on the nation's economy and especially on the American citizens and businesses located in the low-volume areas would be devastating. We find it puzzling that many of those raising questions about postal reform represent the very rural areas of the country that would be most hurt by failing to act now to bolster the USPS.

The Postal Service is for many Americans the only tangible presence of the national government in their lives. It has helped bind the nation together socially, politically and economically for more than 200 years. That vital role continues today. Recently, our two organizations signed an agreement with the Department of Homeland Security and other federal agencies to ensure that our members will be available to distribute medical supplies everywhere in the country in the event of a biological weapons attack or some other national emergency. Keeping the Postal Service strong is a way to keep America strong.

The men and women who deliver your constituents' letters and packages every day urge you to support Senate floor consideration of the postal reform legislation that emerged from the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee with near-unanimous support. By doing so, you will help preserve a national treasure and strengthen the only delivery organization that serves every home and business in America every day of the year.

Sincerely,



William H. Young

President
National Association of Letter Carriers



Dale A. Holton

President
National Rural Letter Carriers Association