



Washington Is Active

Congressional Committee to take up Postal reform bill

The U.S. House of Representatives Oversight and Reform Committee on Thursday (May 13, 2021) will take up a pair of bills to reform the cash-strapped U.S. Postal Service.

Rep Carolyn Maloney (NY), the Democrat who chairs the panel, earlier this year circulated draft legislation to address some key USPS financial issues, such as eliminating a requirement to pre-fund retiree health benefits and require postal employees to enroll in government-retiree health plan Medicare, for a saving of \$40 billion to \$50 billion over 10 years. The committee did not immediately release the text of the planned reform bills on Monday.

The Postal Service has struggled with poor delivery performance over the past year, facing a huge boost in packages and COVID-19 staffing issues.

In March, Postmaster General Louis DeJoy proposed a 10-year strategic plan that would eliminate \$160 billion in forecasted red ink by **SLOWING** some mail deliveries, cutting some retail hours, and closing some locations.

DeJoy said in March that action was urgently needed: "We're losing \$10 billion a year - gotta fix it."

Separately, Maloney and other Democrats have drafted a letter in support of potentially \$8 billion in an infrastructure bill "to enable the Postal Service to purchase an all-electric delivery fleet and the needed infrastructure to support that fleet."

The letter also calls for requiring that "at least 75% of the Postal Service's new fleet must be electric or zero-emission" and for USPS to "acquire only electric or zero-emission vehicles after 2040." USPS also wants President Joe Biden's administration to calculate pension obligations

using "modern actuarial principles" that would save a further \$12 billion.

USPS has reported net losses of \$86.7 billion since 2007. One reason is 2006 legislation mandating that it pre-fund more than \$120 billion in retiree healthcare and pension liabilities, a requirement that labor unions have called an unfair burden not shared by other businesses.

Stay tuned. I will continue to follow this story and update our webpage as I receive more information.

"No work is insignificant. All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence."

—Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Van Heath, Legislative Rep.