



# Legislative Hope



As the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress begins to take aim on the issues that plague the United States Postal Service, incredibly bi-partisan signs of reason seem to be trickling out of Washington DC. While comprehensive reform addressing many of the issues that confront us like the \$5 Billion pre-funding requirement seem to be too much to hope for, small steps toward protecting the Service and therefore obviously our jobs are emerging from Capitol Hill. It begins with our Independent friend, Vermont Senator, Bernie Sanders, who recently proposed legislation that would impose a two year moratorium on plans to close as many as eighty-two mail processing facilities nationwide in the coming months including our own Scranton facility, cutting thousands of decent paying jobs in its wake. Senator Sanders blamed the current financial woes on the 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act passed by former President Bush and a lame duck Republican congress "This onerous and unprecedented burden that costs \$5.5 billion a year is responsible for all of the financial losses posted by the Postal Service since October 2012," Sanders said. The Senator added "At a time when Postal Service revenue is increasing, it makes no sense to eliminate thousands of jobs and slow down the mail service that millions of Americans rely on," adding "We should be working to strengthen the Postal Service, not send it into a death spiral."

Cosponsors on the Sanders initiative include Senators Jon Tester (D-Mont.), Edward Markey (D-Mass.), Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.), Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), Al Franken (D-Minn.), Tom Udall (D-N.M.), Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich.), Chris Murphy (D-Conn.), and Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.)

More recently Rep. Dave McKinley (R-WV) and Rep. Paul Tonko (D-NY) introduced House Resolution 54, which, while not binding on the Congress, supports a return to pre January 5 service standard levels and reads

*"Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Postal Service should take all appropriate measures to restore service standards in effect as of July 1, 2012.*

*Whereas on January 5, 2015, the United States Postal Service has implemented lower "service standards" to virtually eliminate overnight delivery of first class mail and periodicals, and further delay most other mail;*

*Whereas delayed mail negatively impacts businesses, hurts residents, rural communities and the economy, and drives customers away, resulting in lower revenue and worsens the Postal Service's financial situation; and  
Whereas robust service standards implemented by the United States Postal Service are essential to providing prompt and timely delivery of all mail: online purchases, local newspapers, newsletters, bill payments, letters, invitations, packages, and medicines: Now, therefore, be it Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Postal Service should take all appropriate measures to restore service standards in effect as of July 1, 2012.any bi-partisan voice protecting expresses the sense of the House of Representatives that the Postal Service should take all appropriate measures to restore the service standards that were in effect as of July 1, 2012."*

HR-54 seems to be generating bi-partisan support as we all hope for a fresh start as both the House and the Senate are now controlled by one party. The obstructionists within the Republican ranks are now the majority and the onus is on them to move the country forward including the Postal Service. On the other hand, the President's recent budget proposal embraces the misguided philosophy of cutting service as a path to survival. Fortunately the Congress is not bound by the President's budget. What does this all mean for us as Mail Handlers and Postal employees? Only time will tell. We still face the onerous burden of pre-paying \$5.5 Billion into the Retiree Health Benefit Fund imposed by a lame duck Republican Congress way back in 2006. The Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act, which achieved very little enhancement and no real accountability and nearly singlehandedly contributed to the near destruction of the Postal Service following the Great Recession of 2008. But first things first, stopping the insanity of closing mail processing plants and degrading service while we make our case to capture a greater share of the package market is critical to our long term survival. Stay connected to the legislative process at [npmhu.org](http://npmhu.org) and click on the Legislative & Political tab.

In Solidarity,  
John Gibson

## Impact Updates

The specter of involuntary reassignment hovers over the Local as we still await notice from the Postal Service regarding the potential impact to Mail Handlers within the NDC and as the effective date of reassignment for our Scranton facility nears. As we previously reported, during the informational briefing of Friday January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015, District Manager Chu Falling-Star informed us that an excessing proposal has been submitted by Plant Manager Morrow to management's Eastern Area Headquarters. The Plant Manager stated during the briefing that the Union's Regional office would be notified sometime the following week as to the details of any excessing event. We are now closing in on three weeks since management revealed its intentions and our Regional Office has not yet been informed and no additional information is available. As of this writing we await additional details on the impact to the craft. In the interim we have identified a number of vacan-

cies within the Philadelphia P & DC as well as our Trenton facility as reassignment opportunities for those who may be impacted. You should know that as soon as any additional information is available it will be shared.

On the other side of the Local, our Scranton facility awaits the movement of mail processing operations and personnel to the Lehigh Valley P & DC which is scheduled to occur July of this year. As we have reported, the Union disputes the post AMP staffing model presented by the Postal Service. During a recent site visit Branch President Glycenfer and I, along with Representative Bob Butsko toured the workroom floor reviewing opportunities to retain additional Mail Handlers post consolidation. To that end Brothers Glycenfer and Butsko have and continue to conduct a review of function 4 and dock operations as we prepare to make our case. As we move forward any developments will be shared.

John Gibson

Reservations by  
February 14, 2015  
215 788 5308

Members Free  
First Guest \$25.00\*

## Local 308 Winter Event

Dinner Dance  
February 21, 2015  
7:00 PM—11:00 PM

Waterfall Room  
2791 Southampton Rd.  
Philadelphia, PA 19154

\* Additional guest tickets \$35.00 each depending on availability

Buffet Dinner  
Dancing  
Open Bar

*NPMHU, Local 308  
President's Report  
January 2015*