

Denver District To Cut Hours For Light/Limited Duty Employees

– by George Prusak, President CPWU

Denver District Managers called a meeting for various union leaders on Friday July 31st to tell us about their plans to initiate Phase 2 of the NRP, (National Reassessment Program). This plan has been speeded up to take place over weeks instead of months. Even notification time to the unions and the employee has been reduced from 30 days to 48 hours before managers will come into the office and give job offers to injured employees.

First, if you are told that you have a NRP meeting scheduled you must (for your own sake) notify the union right away because with such a short period of time (48 hours), we may not have received the notification by mail and do not know that you are being interviewed. It may be too late after the interview to help you and you may be sent home immediately and not be able to come back to work for a very long time, if ever.

Do not rely on your supervisor or postmaster to help you, their input or opinions will not count. If they tell you this, they are lying. It is only determined by mail volume, the restrictions that you currently have and the number of Function 4 hours in your office. I firmly believe that this is just a way to reduce the number of work hours and the number of employees currently working for the Postal Service since early outs did not come close to the projections that the Service was trying to reduce the employee compliment by.

Then, they must try and find you work within your craft outside of your regular schedule either inside or outside of the facility where you work.

do and how many hours of work there is. Remember, the union was not invited to participate in this process so they may not have gotten this right for your office or exactly what you can or cannot do. I believe they have their own agenda and did not want any input from the union what-so-ever.

Now once they come up for a job within your restrictions in your office, you and the union will get a 48 hour notification that a meeting is to be had. Like I stated earlier, the union may not get this notice in time so it is incumbent upon you to contact us to be there with you during this critical meeting. During this meeting you will be told if there is any work in the office you can do and for how long. They may even say that there is no work available. If you go into the meeting without representation, be careful what you say and remember if you refuse any job offer, the USPS states that you will not be eligible for compensation benefits. You may even be told to leave work and possibly to get an update from your physician.

Once you accept the job offer, you are guaranteed nothing. You may come into work one day and be told that there is no work available for you that day and be sent home. If this happens, you need to ask for a steward so a grievance can be filed. Remember, you can talk to us

There are a lot of changes the USPS is trying to make, and they have changed the way they have done business in the past. They claim that they must fine you productive and necessary work. We believe this is not the case with the law as it is written or their own policies and regulations as they have written them.

Remember, before they can tell you that there is no work they must make every effort to find you work within your work schedule, in your craft and outside the facility you work.

If there is no work within the above criteria they must try and find you work outside your craft within your regular schedule either inside or outside your office. Then, they must try and find you work within your craft outside of your regular schedule either inside or outside of the facility where you work. Finally, they must try and find you work outside your craft, outside your regular schedule, and outside the facility. They have to look within a fifty mile radius. They **must** do this before they send you home.

If there is no work under the above criteria, they must give a CA-7/7A so you can be paid from OWCP at the percentage of wage that you qualify. If your claim has already been closed by OWCP and you have or will reach MMI (maximum medical improvement) they must also give you a Form CA-2A so you can reopen your claim. This could take a while and you might not be paid for this period of time. Management is also telling us that if you use sick or annual leave you will not be allowed to buy it back.

There is a lot more to this thing and I have only covered some of the necessary information that you need. It is a serious matter and you will need representation during this process.

Do not allow yourself to be fooled, the USPS is after your work. Also, if you are in an offduty status and collecting OWCP benefits, once a year goes by the Postal Service will remove you from the rolls and you will no longer be considered an employee. You will lose all of your Postal Benefits including medical insurance and OWCP can try and get you a rehab job, like at McDonalds, Walmart or anywhere else that they can. If you refuse this job, you will no longer receive a check from them as well.

If you have any questions, contact your union representative & remember the job you save could be yours! **CPWU**

BELIEVE THEY HAVE THEIR OWN AGENDA AND DID NOT WANT ANY INPUT FROM THE UNION WHAT-SO-EVER.

The first thing management must do is give a stand up talk to employees. This stand up talk will tell all employees about what is to happen during the current process. If you did not get a stand up talk prior to getting a reassessment about your job offer, you should notify the union so a grievance may be filed. Also, take notes and document everything that happens. You may need to also file an EEO or MSPB appeal.

Here is how it works, a team of management members from operations, injury comp, medical unit and labor relations go together and looked at everyone who has restrictions, the amount of work in the office, and within the restrictions of the employee. They then matched up work the employee can

while on the clock. Do not be intimidated by the supervisor or postmaster if they tell you that you can't call us. If you are told to clock out and call the union from home, just remind the supervisor that you are entitled to talk with a steward and that a grievance will also be filed for denial of representation.

There are **new** changes to the Rehab Act and the Service must follow these changes. Please make yourself aware of your rights under the Rehab Act so you can file charges through MSPB or EEO. The union will handle the grievance procedure.

National Level Grievances have been filed on what the Service is trying to do. We must also try and protect you individually as well, so it will be necessary for us to file on your behalf.

Do not be intimidated by the supervisor or postmaster if they tell you that you can't call us.



Happy Labor Day, September 7th from your CPWU Officers.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Send a Message to Your Senators:

Oppose S1507 pg 2
Health Care in America pg 2

House Committee Approves HR22 pg 2

Final Employee Free Choice Act Push pg 2

Analogy of Postal Management pg 3

House Committee Approves HR22

- APWU Web News Article #078-09, July 10, 2009

The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee unanimously approved H.R. 22 on July 10, clearing the way for consideration of the measure by the full House. The bill would provide desperately needed short-term relief to the Postal Service, which is facing a severe financial crisis. H.R. 22 would modify a provision of the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act that requires the Postal Service to prefund the healthcare benefits of retirees from its operating budget. The funding obligation, combined with the nation's economic downturn, has brought the USPS to the brink of insolvency.

The bill would allow the Postal Service to pay a portion of the benefits from the Postal Service Health Benefit Fund for three years, through Fiscal Year 2011, and is expected to save the USPS more than \$2 billion per year. The relief provided by H.R. 22 comes "without a single dollar of taxpayer money," noted APWU Legislative and Political Director Myke Reid.

The House bill has 338 co-sponsors, so adoption by the full House appears certain. However, a companion bill has not yet been introduced in the Senate. APWU President William Burrus praised the vote. "We are pleased by the vote and eager for H.R. 22 to become law," he said. "But we are mindful of the long-term financial challenges facing the Postal Service." Consideration of H.R. 22 by the House is expected before Congress' August recess. **CPWU**

VOICE OF COLORADO

COLORADO POSTAL WORKERS UNION
American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO
5423 Pecos Street, Denver, CO 80221-6400
Office 303-459-4313, Fax 303-459-4420
website www.cpwu.org

A Proud Member of the Postal Press Association

State Officers

George Prusak, Pres. CPWU
P.O.B. 1150, Broomfield, CO 80038
303 459-4313

Gil Trujillo, Vice Pres.
P.O.B. 8035, Pueblo, CO 81008
719 369-9915

Jill Taulbee, Sect./Treas.
P.O.B. 470998, Aurora, CO 80047
303-902-9272

Tim Mannion,
Dir. of Educ./Organization
970 244-3446

Grand Junction, CO
Ron Gorman, Associate Editor
303 480-5465
Denver, CO 80221-6400

Wanda Gorman, Proofreader

Trustee

• Chuck Bader • Mark Tindall • Gail Kirby

The Voice is published quarterly. Send copy and address change to Ron Gorman, editor, Voice of Colorado, 5423 Pecos St., Denver, CO 80221-6400.

Editorial Policy

The Voice encourages letters to the editor. We ask, however, that they be legible. The writer's name, address & local must be included and must be signed. Name will be omitted upon request. The managing editor reserves the right to edit all material submitted. No material will be printed that contains libelous statements or personal attacks on APWU officers or members. Opinions expressed are those of the writer and not necessarily those of the editor or officers of the CPWU.

**Deadline: October, November, December Issue
October 23, 2009**

SEND A MESSAGE TO YOUR SENATORS: OPPOSE S. 1507

An amendment to a bill to provide temporary financial relief to the cash-strapped Postal Service was adopted by a Senate committee July 29, rendering the bill unacceptable to the APWU. The amendment, offered by Sen. Tom Coburn (R-OK), would require arbitrators to consider the financial health of the Postal Service when ruling on postal contracts.

"We oppose on principle, legislation that interferes with the collective bargaining process," said APWU President William Burrus. Under current law, arbitrators must consider the "comparability" of postal wages to employees in the private sector who perform similar work. "In fact, arbitrators routinely consider the Postal Service's financial status as part of the context in which negotiations are conducted," Burrus said. "However, to attach this specific requirement to the law leaves workers at a severe disadvantage, and makes the bargaining process more subject to manipulation."

Sen. Joe Lieberman (ID-CT), chairman of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs, and Sen. Tom Carper (D-DE), chairman of the subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, Federal Services and International Security, supported the amendment, and voted with committee Republicans for its adoption. "We are deeply disappointed that lawmakers we have supported voted for this reactionary amendment," Burrus said. "We will do everything we can to defeat it."

"We are asking APWU members to contact their senators and urge them to oppose the amended bill," Burrus said. To send a message to your senator. [<http://capwiz.com/apwu/home/>] From APWU.org

Health Care in America

- by Gil Trujillo, CPWU Vice President

President Obama is trying to get congress to work on and pass a healthcare reform bill. Why is the Democrat vs. Republican thing? Shouldn't it be an American thing?

Forty percent of the adult Hispanic population in Colorado is uninsured. More than one in eight children in Colorado is uninsured. Colorado ranks 13th in the nation in uninsured per capita, despite a highly-educated workforce and relatively low poverty level.

One of the largest single factors in rising health insurance premiums is the large number of uninsured.

All of us might know either family members or friends who do not have health insurance. These numbers should alarm everyone that we have a broken healthcare system. Health care providers, doctors and hospitals pass uncompensated costs associated with caring for the uninsured to insurers.

Medicaid, a government funded program intended to help lower - income individuals pay for medical costs, only assists those whose annual income is less than \$19,620.

"Fed Ex and UPS know they cannot rip you off"

Government run healthcare? Critics claim, would you want the same people who deliver your mail (the

government) to be in charge of your health plan?

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid says yes. Call it the Postal Service Plan. (According to a survey in the Federal Times in 2008 the USPS had a very high approval rating) Senator Reid says he is confident both private companies and the option of a public plan can live in harmony.

"When you send a birthday gift to a relative the products that you can choose can be sent by Fed-Ex, UPS, or the United States Postal Service. The Postal Service may not be perfect, but the public option is there, and the private companies, Fed Ex and UPS, know they cannot rip you off or be slacking on their service," Reid said.

"Just like our proposal for the health care system, you don't have to choose the Postal Service, But it's good to know it's there and for some, it is all they can afford.

Some Republicans say universal healthcare is socialist. Does that mean we are socialists who work for the Postal Service because we provide mail service to the American Public?

It's too bad when we have to resort to name calling when we cannot logically defend or come up with a viable working solution. Flip floppers, Socialism, un-American, we have heard them all.

The time to fix this mess is now. The amount we spent on the Iraqi war would more than adequately fund a working health care plan. **CPWU**

Final Employee Free Choice Act Push

- by Gary Scott, President, DMAL

The Colorado AFL-CIO has issued the alert for all activists that want to see the Employee Free Choice Act become law, to stand up for our final push to ensure passage. The biggest labor law reform of our lifetime stands before us! When the Minnesota Supreme Court declared Al Franken as the second Senator from the state, the passage of the EFCA seems a realistic possibility. A "perfect storm" still would be needed to ensure 60 votes on the floor at one time.

The health of two U.S. Senators (Kennedy and Byrd) could determine whether we succeed or fail in getting it approved. An employee Free Choice Act work plan got underway on July 6th when an open letter from 120 Colorado religious leaders and seminarians in support of the Employee Free Choice Act was delivered to both Senator Udall and Senator Bennet's offices. We expect the bill to be

debated on the floor of the U.S. Senate, therefore we need to ensure that both Senators are hearing regularly from supporters as the debate heats up.

We had a successful campaign thus far, even though we have had a lull the last four to six weeks; that was part of the plan. Over 15,000 letters have been sent and 5,000 phone calls have been made. In addition to the 120 faith leaders, over 300 small business leaders and approximately 200 community leaders and organizations sent letters to the editors and covered events across the state.

Activists are being recruited to join phone banks that begin July 13th, to reach out to members to educate them about the status of the bill. In addition, some will be asked to make visits to the Senators' offices while the bill is on the floor. The work plan calls for hourly visits to each of the Senators' offices, while the bill is being debated. **CPWU**

ANALOGY OF POSTAL MANAGEMENT

- by Boogie Whitfied, President, Aurora, CO local

Over the years, postal management has meant different things to different employees. Some of the relationships with management have been very good, and some have been very bad. However, this variance in relationships is common in most business organizations.

Because, I'm a member of many different organizations, I'm often asked, "are things really as bad as we hear and is anything being done about it?" I have a difficult time trying to explain relationships between management and employees without using analogies. Analogies help the non-postal workers to sort of get an idea about what I am trying to convey.

At first, I began by trying to explain where these postal management people come from. It is sometimes difficult to believe that most postal management personnel come from the craft workers pool. So, at one time these people worked side-by-side with the craft employees. This is not a bad thought because you would think that management personnel would have an idea about what is required to accomplish the mission at hand. I explain that this is not necessarily true. It is truly amazing how the craft employee is transformed into a postal supervisor. It is something like a caterpillar being metamorphosed into a beautiful butterfly. At least that seems to be how management views themselves after becoming a supervisor. As supervisors, they are stronger, faster, and smarter than those craft employees they left behind. The same craft employees they once worked beside have suddenly become worthless, lazy, tricky, thieves and just someone that you have to stay on all of the time.

Because, they are supervisors, they believe their superior qualities grow

Decades ago, there was a very happy place for wildebeasts called Aurora. The grass was green and plentiful."

compared to the qualities of craft employees. Often times the evaluation of new supervisors is not so glorious in the eyes of the craft employees. Usually craft employees view new supervisors as the same people that would walk off and leave a job incomplete, the same person who lacked the capabilities to perform assigned duties, and the same person who made sweetheart deals with management at other union members' expense, the same person that would do absolutely anything to get out of work.

Before I get into the analogies of postal management, I have to establish the fact that any and all relationships are built on trust. Regardless of the type of relationship, good or bad, they are built on trust or the lack of trust. Man-woman, father-daughter, mother-son, boxer-trainer, coach-players, all of these types of relationships are built on trust. Can you trust management?

- a. Decades ago there was a very happy place for wildebeasts called Aurora. The grass was green and plentiful. The wildebeast (clerks) herd would eat and eat and grow. Times were good. The wildebeast only had to watch out for lions (management). The lions had their purpose in life and that was to weed out the old, sick, and slow of the herd. They have always been good at that. As the lions would hunt and bring down a wildebeast to feast upon, the rest of the herd would stop running and just watch the lions eat away. They would go about their normal way of life because they knew that as long as the lions were eating, the rest of the herd was safe. The relationship between the lions and the wildebeests remain the same until a new pride of lions came in and took over the territory of Aurora. These lions were aggressive, brutal and went against the laws of nature. They would kill wildebeests whether they were hungry or not. They seemed to enjoy taking down wildebeests, just for the sport of it. The wildebeest continued their ways with their new pride of lions. As the lions would feast on a wildebeest, the clerks would stand and watch thinking, "we are safe." The wildebeest herd, of course, became smaller and smaller. The herd of Aurora is very small compared to what it used to be. The management pride will eat until all the clerks are gone; clerks are becoming extinct.

The clerk fell to the ground in amazement that the snake bit him."

- b. A man (clerk) finally was able to take some vacation that he had planned for in recent years in the mountains of Colorado. As he finished putting on his

boots, he heard a voice calling "Hey Mr., hey Mr." He looked but couldn't see anything until a baby camouflaged rattler raised his head and said, "Hey Mr.," again. The snake continued and explained that it would die if it was not warmed soon and that it would really appreciate the man's help in getting across the river. The man fulfilled the snake's wishes, by putting the snake in his bosom and crossing the river to the other side. Thereafter, the snake would become cold and ask for warmth. Time passed, the snake grew and one day the snake bit the clerk in the neck. The clerk fell to the ground in amazement that the snake bit him. Finding it difficult to breathe and even harder to talk, he asked the snake, "Why would you bite me?" The snake replied, "Hell you knew I was a snake when you picked me up."

- c. The U.S. Postal Service is a huge ship

that has been on the open seas for many years. The ship has two types of people on board, management and workers. The ship has recently developed some problems and finds itself in troubled waters. Both types of people blame the other; however, management makes all of the decisions, all the rules, and gives instructions; and clerks follow instructions. The two types of people seem to be oblivious to the fact that they need each other if they are to survive. Management works hard in creating division among the workers in an effort to control them. A unified workforce is a strong workforce. Without the cooperation of both parties, the ship will surely sink. Management must realize they need the workers if the U.S. Postal Service is to stay afloat.

Now I don't feel this strongly about all postal management personnel. There are a very few that I believe are decent and they know who they are. The rest are all the same; they will sit down at the computer and input situated lies, get on the phone and tell a lie, will use one of their favorite clerks to wrong fellow clerks. They will give you a 7-day suspension just because they were instructed to do so, not because you've earned it. Do I trust management? No!

I have not been complimentary of management; did I lie? No, as clerks, we have to step up and do our part. We have to stop management from doing our work by

providing statements. A complaint about management without a statement is like a car without an engine. It's going nowhere.

As postal workers, management, and craft employees have to realize that our ship is going down slowly, respect for each other, working together and understanding could keep it afloat. We are in the business of customer service. Everything we do should be with customer satisfaction in mind. Customer service should be our number one priority. Satisfied customers always return.

Satisfied customers don't walk out of the lobby in disgust for having to wait long periods of time and head straight to the UPS and Fed Ex Store. Customer service is our business.

Do the right thing, for the right reasons.

CPWU

Quote of the Month

by Darren Joyce, Flint MI APWU

The Union has never taken anyone's bid from them. I know and expect that people will be upset when these things happen to them, but the Union did not do this, management did. Remember this when you spout off at your stewards. they are the ones helping you. Don't poke the wrong people in the eye. CPWU

DON'T CLOSE MY POST OFFICE!!! I BUY STAMPS TOO

— by George Prusak, President CPWU

Most of my article for this issue was taken from *The Western Region Guide on Repositioning*, put together by our Regional Coordinator Omar Gonzalez. This is an 84 page guide on *Migration Madness by the USPS, Excessive Excessing and Revolving Re-Assignments*.

I wish to personally thank Omar for taking the time to come into town and addressing APWU officers and stewards from Colorado, Wyoming and Utah on these important issues.

OPTIMIZATION & CONSOLIDATION INITIATIVE TO TARGET 3,200 STATIONS WITH 1,600 TO FOLLOW

Management took initial legal action to get sanctioning for its plan to consolidate and/or discontinue post offices throughout the United States under their Station & Branch Optimization & Consolidation Initiative (OCI).

On July 3, 2009 (two months after management started the initiative) management asked the PRC for its blessing on the initiative to be granted under an "Advisory Opinion." On July 10th the PRC issued an "Order" responding to the request that declares management "fostered" the initiative in part because of the continuing decline in mail volume and the financial crisis.

USPS is asking the PRC to expedite the issuance of an opinion that determines if OCI will change the nature of postal services on a substantially nationwide basis. A Hearing is set for late July.

Management is not waiting for the opinion of the PRC and has begun to alert union locals of the discontinuance studies of post offices. Already Nevada and Oregon have started the process in the Western Area. Regional Offices appear to be out of the loop. 740 offices have already been identified by Postal HQ in the first wave of OCI.

PROBABLE IMMEDIATE IMPACTS

Customers who have P.O. Boxes may have immediate impacts as box sections are relocated to other offices or cluster boxes or non personnel P.O. Box Units. Zip Code changes will be left up to the Area Vice-Presidents. Carrier Route consolidation's, while not part of OCI, will take place with entire carrier operations being relocated to other offices.

CITIES AND STATES CURRENTLY UNDER STUDY IN OUR STATE AND THE WESTERN REGION.

COLORADO - Aurora; Boulder; Colorado Springs and surrounding area; Denver and surrounding area; Fort Collins; Littleton; Pueblo; & Grand Junction, Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon and Washington.

THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING

According to a post on National Union website a list has not yet been issued to the National Union. Level 24 offices are the first on the radar! And of course the "regular" excessing, continues in just about every state and U.S. Territory.

WHAT CAN AND MUST WE DO?

Almost every branch or station will eventually be "studied" for discontinuance so union locals and members must prepare for and engage in a fight for survival like never before. Is USPS financially

strapped? Perhaps, but there must be compliance with law, contracts and community service.

The Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) covers what happens to employees in discontinued installations and in the consolidation of installations with regards to seniority protections, but the impact to work and home lives is no where covered in the CBA.

There will be a period of public input for a closure or consolidation. Questionnaires will be put into all P.O. Boxes, Letter Carriers are supposed to deliver notices to all customers, lobby notices are to be posted and questionnaires to be made available at the windows. Customers only will have a few days to respond.

So we have to take it to the streets literally. We have to be involved in getting the public to participate in the "Public Input" process. But this has to be done off

the clock and in a professional and diplomatic manner with the focus on service, service, and more service. We certainly don't want customers, and remember we are customers having to drive miles to another Post Office to get our mail, send a package, or buy stamps, etc.

Could this be why customers are being pushed more and more online for stamps by mail, postage online (at a discount) for packages and carrier pickup (click and ship)?

One of the first actions we must take is to educate ourselves and other member son the reality of wholesale closure of stations, branches and eventually post offices.

We all must become grass roots activists. Then and only then can we engage the community and civic leaders. If we the employee don't get involved we may not survive this mess! CPWU

Employee Free Choice Act

— by Mike Cerbo, Executive Director AFL-CIO & John Fleck, President, DALF

It is the time we have all been waiting for. With Al Franken now officially the Junior Senator from Minnesota, we are closer than ever before to passing the Employee Free Choice Act. Still, easing the pressure is not an option. In fact, we must do just the opposite and keep gong strong. Please make sure Senators Bennet and Udall hear your voice this week on the Employee Free Choice Act. Call 1-866-207-2060 to connect with them on the issue that matters most right now to the working class.

Write Senators Bennet and Udall to encourage them to support the Employee Free Choice Act. Mail to one of the following offices:

Senator Bennett:
Denver Metro Office
2300 15th St., Suite 450
Denver, CO 80202
Phone: 303-455-7600
Toll Free: 866-455-9866
Fax: 303-455-8851

Senator Udall:
Denver Office
999 Eighteenth Street
North Tower, Suite 1525
Denver, CO 80202
Phone: 303-650-7820

Let your local community know how you feel! Send a letter to your local paper's editor. Let them know why the Employee Free Choice Act matters to you, your family and your community! CPWU

