

Congressman Dennis Kucinich

Congressman Dennis Kucinich's Prepared Remarks Press Conference June 25, 2012

I stand here today in solidarity with Postal Workers across the country who are calling on Congress and the Postmaster General to protect the United States Postal Service (USPS).

As an ardent supporter of the Postal Service, I am deeply concerned about USPS' financial condition and appreciate the difficult decisions the Postal Service must make in order to ensure its survival. I strongly believe that we can protect the viability of the USPS and the unique irreplaceable services it provides to all Americans without sacrificing its dedicated employees or its mandate to provide universal service.

The Postal Service employs the greatest number of veterans outside of the Department of Defense. It provides a living wage and decent benefits for the middle-class. For many, Postal Service employees often serve as the only connection to the government by providing service to every American home, six days a week. That is why I am committed to ensuring that our local post offices will still be there when the economy recovers.

And there are solutions out there. As a member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I have been active in supporting a number of initiatives that would provide vital financial relief for the Postal Service without undermining its workforce.

I am a strong supporter and cosponsor of H.R. 1351, which would fix the overpayments the USPS has made to its Civil Service Retirement System pension account and allow it to use the surplus in its Federal Employees Retirement System pension account to cover the expected case shortfall when its annual Retiree Health Benefits Fund payment is due at the end of the month. I have also been a strong supporter of legislation that would provide financial relief for the USPS by temporarily allowing it to prefund its future health care obligations out of the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund instead of its operating funds. I join Postal Workers across America in calling on Congress to pass these critical bills.

I will continue to fight any efforts to weaken the Postal Service, including any efforts to privatize essential services. There are ways to generate revenue without cutting jobs, essential services and closing vital post office branches in communities that rely on them.

I will also fight any plans that would force workers and Postal Service union employees from having to break their labor agreements and that would cut the 6-day delivery. I am committed to the protection of Postal Service employees and to the preservation of the universal service it is mandated to provide.

I want to thank my friends who have come here to fight for what's right and applaud your courage.