



February 23 2017

Postal Reform Limp Along

Few terms generate the excitement and enthusiasm than those magic words "Postal Reform" do. Even typing it gets us all tingly here at ProNews HQ. Still, even if you do not share our passion for such reform, you are wise to be interested and concerned.

In case you aren't aware, the Postal Service is in kind of a mess. They continue to lose money, but were forced to lower their rates last year because of the expiration of the exigent surcharge. They've managed to get by so far, partly by not paying bills they don't like, primarily to the Federal Government. The feds aren't such good sports when we try managing our finances that way. Still USPS is unlikely to close their doors, but they are being prevented from making investments in their infrastructure which will likely impact service in the future. A healthy Postal Service is in the best interest of all of us.

Hooray for Congress!! OK, not a sentence you see written a lot, but Congress has the chance to save the day with H.R. 756, the Postal Service Reform Act of 2017. Woo hoo!! It will fix USPS financial woes with a variety of measures:

- It cancels the unpaid obligations USPS currently has for future retiree health benefits required under the last postal reform act (Boo!! For the last postal reform act, we mean.)
- It moves USPS retiree health benefits funding to Medicare;
- It brings back half of the exigent rates – an overall increase of 2.15%. We can handle that, right?;
- It moves existing residential mail boxes to unfortunately named "cluster" boxes, but only if 40% of residents agree to it. OK, that provision is weird and potentially detrimental to the industry;
- It does a number of other things with the rate setting process, and the Board of Governors that are even more boring than the rest of these provisions. [Read the](#)

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So it's got some good points and bad points, but it puts the Postal Service on a healthier path, and at least ensures some stability for a few years.

But, of course, it isn't going to happen.

Two cares will get in the way: Medicare and Obamacare. Members of the Ways & Means committee in the house have called the bill a "raid on Medicare." Ouch. Until Congress has overhauled Medicare, which Speaker of the House Paul Ryan would like to do, and repealed and replaced the Affordable Care Act, postal reform seems unlikely to move out of committee.

So H.R. 756 has bipartisan support and the support of the Postal Service – and it is pretty much doomed.

In the end, the Postal Service will continue to deliver your mail, but it might be a bit slower, and in older trucks, but sooner or later some kind of bill will emerge from Congress – and it could be a lot worse than this one.

Stay tuned!

ProList's First 2017 Webinar Set for March 23

You don't want to miss this one

Ever wonder how we learn all of those complex postal regulations? How we keep up to date on all of the regulatory details required to send your mail successfully? Is it long hours of study? Constant conferences, seminars, reading the DMM late at night? HA! Nope – we ask Leo.

Leo Raymond, President of Mailer's Hub, is a true treasure in the world of mailers. In a long career with the Postal Service Leo pretty much wrote the Domestic Mail Manual, and yet somehow retained a sense of humor and the ability to speak to humans. We've asked Leo to join us on March 23rd for our next Webinar: *State of the Postal Service: An in depth look at where and why the Postal Service is where it is, and where it's headed.* The Postal Service is an essential partner to anyone who uses the mail, and understanding their outlook is important to long term planning. Leo is a gifted speaker who is able to take technical information and make it interesting and, dare we say, entertaining. You need to know your industry. You need to hear what Leo has to say.

Mark your calendar today for March 23, at 12:30 p.m. We'll send further details as the date approaches, but this is one webinar you do not want to miss.

Contact Us Today!

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