



## Statement Of APWU President Mark Dimondstein On Attacks To The Public Postal Service

February 20, 2025

The *Washington Post* has reported that the Trump Administration will soon issue an Executive Order firing the Postal Board of Governors, and placing the United States Postal Service under the control of the Commerce Department.

If this reporting is true, it would be an outrageous, unlawful attack on a storied national treasure, enshrined in the Constitution and created by Congress to serve every American home and business equally.

Any attack on the Postal Service would be part of the billionaire oligarch coup, directed not just at the postal workers our union represents, but the millions of Americans who rely on the critical public service our members provide every single day.

The public Postal Service is the low-cost anchor of a \$1.2 trillion mail and shipping industry, which supports more than 7 million jobs in communities across the country.

Efforts to privatize the Postal Service, in whole or in part, or to strip it of its independence or public service mission, would be of no benefit to the American people. Instead, it would drive up postage rates and lead to reduced service, especially to rural America.

Postal workers struck in 1970 to win collective bargaining rights and to rid the Post Office Department of the political patronage that crippled the Agency at that time.

The *Postal Reorganization Act*, which created the modern Postal Service after the strike, begins by saying "The United States Postal



Service shall be operated as a basic and fundamental service provided to the people by the Government of

the United States, authorized by the Constitution, created by Act of Congress, and supported by the people."

The law created the Postal Service as an independent Agency, freed from the shifting political winds, and dedicated to serving the American public. The law created the Postal Board of Governors, and empowers it and it alone to hire and fire the Postmaster General. Any effort by the Administration to remove the Board or fire postal executives is clearly illegal.

The *Washington Post* also reported that the Board of Governors intends to fight this hostile takeover of the public Postal Service. The APWU supports their efforts to defend our national treasure.

The Postal Service is owned by the people, for the benefit of the people. Postal workers are dedicated to our mission to serve, no matter who sits in the White House or in Congress.

Postal workers and our unions will join with the public to fight for the vibrant, independent, and public Postal Service we all deserve.

Use the form on [APWU.org](http://APWU.org) or dial (844) 402-1001 to call your senator and tell them to stop the illegal takeover of the public postal service!

## USPS Board Of Governors Elects New Leadership

On November 14, in its fourth and final meeting of 2024, the Postal Board of Governors elected fellow governor Amber F. McReynolds to

serve as chair of the Board. She also currently chairs the Board's Election Mail committee. Additionally, the governors elected Derek Kan to serve as vice chairman.

At this meeting, the Board discussed the Postal Service's 2024 financial report, reports from the Audit and Finance committee, Compensation and Governance committee, Operations committee, and Election Mail committee.

It was also the final meeting for Governor Anton Hajjar. Hajjar's seat on the Postal Board of Governors expired on Dec. 8, adding an additional vacant seat to the two existing vacancies. Outgoing President Joe Biden had already submitted three nominees to fill these seats, which

include Val Butler Demings, William Zollars, and Gordon Hartogensis. But, by the time of publication for this issue of *The American Postal Worker*, the Senate failed to move to confirm the president's nominees, and the vacancies are expected to carry over to a new Trump administration.

The Board provides the important oversight in ensuring that this institution continues to provide high-quality service to every community.

The gridlock to confirm these qualified nominees is frustrating, but it further demonstrates the necessity of grassroots actions and vigilance at the state and local level to ensure that the Postal Service is treating employees well and moving the mail

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Change of Service Guaranteed

Return to APWU/MPWU  
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MAINTENANCE CRAFT DIRECTOR

# Fly Like An Eagle So They SAY, But In The Maintenance World It Is Now "Clean Like An Eagle."

by Marti Jablonski

The next holy grail of maintenance to save the post office from Line H grievances, or so they believe!

Scanners are arriving daily in every facility! Do they work? Eeehhhhh Do they have the appropriate information in them? Do they have your correct route? Do they have all the routes you do? Do they have every operation you should be punching to? Do they have every facility you go to in them and with the proper information? My guess is without even looking, is probably not! You see these scanners were not created to make the custo-

dial job easier, faster, more accurate, or user friendly. These scanners were to try to make management appear as if they know what their custodians are supposed to be doing and take away the paper work they could never do right in the first place. These scanners are the new babysitters of the 4776's! Well guess what? They are failing worse than the supervisors did at this job! Now to be fair it was a great idea, if only the guy programming them knew what he was doing, and if he even had an accurate staffing package to work from. You see like any computer program, if you put bad

information in, you get bad information out, and I can tell you first hand, almost every office I go to they do not have accurate staffing packages!

So let's first address the scanners- do you have to use them? Yes because that is what management is telling you to do. Follow the directions of your supervisor, unless it is an unsafe action.

What to do if the scanner does not have the correct information or route? I recommend you write this down on a work order and get your supervisor to sign, or email your supervisor how they would like you to handle this issue now and going forward. Why do all this you may wonder? Well next October when your maintenance steward or appointee for your Line H grievance is figuring out the numbers it will be there for them to address accordingly. Also the rule is, no 4776, no work. I do not recommend any custodian do the supervisors job. Do not send their reports in for them, do not help them by lying about the work you do or how long it takes you to do it. I know so many might think if I do this for them they will let me go easy another time. However that is not the case and that supervisor at the end of the day when they are being admonished by their superior is most likely going to sell you out. Be honest, be diligent, and document your work. If you take a LLV to a carrier because they had a breakdown, then

document that (punch to the proper operation) because you obviously cannot be at the office scrubbing floors while driving a vehicle. Also, you get paid Level 5 to drive and not sweep. I have seen firsthand that many office's that have RMPO's attached to their APO's do not have the information for all the offices. This is where I say, let your supervisor or Postmaster know, and then do as your told. If you are not given any information then notate that and go about your day. Do not keep asking, do not hound them for information, do not question them. You see, they have been told that these scanners will take away the work they once had to do, no more uploading your 4776's or route sheets, not that anyone really had accurate ones. They are supposed to make their jobs easier so they don't have to watch you, pay attention to you, or worry about their Line H numbers ever again. It almost seems like some believe that these scanners can almost walk themselves through the post office and it starts to sparkle again, like magical fairies appear in every room and the work is done. Now for me for some reason I have the song playing in my head as this happens, "Mr. Clean Mr. Clean!" If you have questions about any of this you should definitely be contacting your maintenance steward or local craft director and if you are in an office

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## Member Spotlight

Please submit a member that you feel deserves recognition. A picture (preferred but not required) and a short statement about that member are all that is needed. Let's recognize those around us that make the workplace better for all and the Union stronger.

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MPWU Advisor ..... Vacant

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Battle Creek	Gaylord
Central MI	Great Lakes Area Mail Haulers
Detroit District	Jackson
Farmington	Muskegon
Flint	Southwest MI
480-481	Traverse City
486-487	Western MI
498-499	

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by  
Raymond  
Novakoski

**PRESIDENT, MPWU AL LABRECQUE RETIREE CHAPTER**

# Retiree's Corner

I hope everyone is doing well and had a great holiday. I also hope the new PSHB program was ok for everyone and it went well. I only received a few inquiries about it so it appears the transition went well. I would like to thank the APWU National Union for their unended support on this issue and providing so much info and involvement in negotiations on this issue.

Retiree Chapters need to check out the MPWU newsletter for information on the 2025 Educational Conference in Gladstone MI May 1, 2 and 3. Also take into consideration the 2025 National Retiree Conference in Las Vegas, NV October 6-8, 2025 (more details on APWU website)

I recently found the below article and it supports pretty much everything we have been saying about the disastrous plan the Postmaster DeJoy is proposing. One thing I find interesting is this is not new, ever since postal management went from, a service to the American people to a business model and bonuses, it has been being run down and the bottom line is they still want the USPS privatized. If we look back since the USPS went to a business model, they have tried to reorganize it and run it into the ground. As we know if privatized, the business world would take the cream on the top and leave the rest. Rural America would suffer the most with the suburbs next.

The Post Office is a national institution that delivers mail to ALL Americans and was and still is supported by the American people. When the postal Rate Commission would oversee it and deal with rate increases it was financially viable, some years up others down, but it had positive financial footing. I am hoping that the following article brings to light some of the current issues the USPS is dealing with now.

**IG, regulator bash USPS plans to slow some mail delivery**

A test rollout of a key Postal Service initiative has not achieved any of the promised cost savings, auditors find. JANUARY 6, 2025

by Eric Katz  
Senior Correspondent

One of the U.S. Postal Service's key reform initiatives is worsening service and raising costs, a recent inspector general report found, contrasting the agency's claims about the

impact of its changes.

The IG said a pilot program to test USPS' Regional Transportation Optimization plan, which requires mail to sit overnight at post offices instead of being collected each evening for transportation to a processing center, caused mail to be delivered more slowly without any associated cost savings. As Postmaster General Louis DeJoy now looks to roll out the initiative on a nationwide basis, postal regulators are expressing concerns of the potential fallout.

Only some facilities are set to be impacted by the reforms, namely those more than 50 miles from the Postal Service's new Regional Processing and Distribution Centers. USPS plans to stand up about 60 of those

performance issues. DeJoy recently told Congress some hiccups along the way were expected, noting "the first rockets that went to the moon blew up."

Postal management has said the existing delivery model, in which mail is collected at every post office both in the mornings and in the evenings, is based on a "bygone era of significant single-piece letter mail volumes." While the system may have made sense in that reality, USPS said, it has "engendered costs impossible to justify in today's environment."

Service dipped in all 15 regions where the new schedule was implemented, the IG found, with on-time delivery of single-piece, first-class mail dropping by 16 percentage points

Postal management also recently announced lower targets for 2025, with USPS now saying, for example, it expects to deliver regular cards and letters slated for two-day delivery on time just 87% of the time in fiscal 2025 compared to its goal of 93% in fiscal 2024. For mail scheduled to be delivered in three-to-five days, USPS now hopes to deliver 80% on time compared to 90% in fiscal 2024.

In an initial hearing on the proposal last month, PRC commissioners voiced skepticism of DeJoy's changes and his larger Delivering for America plan. They suggested the reforms have so far led only to worse outcomes.

"What we've been seeing is declining service, higher prices and continued poor financial results," said PRC Chairman Michael Kubayanda. "If there is an upside in exchange for these painful changes, we

**"One of the U.S. Postal Service's key reform initiatives is worsening service and raising costs, a recent inspector general report found, contrasting the agency's claims about the impact of its changes."**

mega-centers, most of which will be located in urban areas. That has led to criticism that postal management's mail slowdown will disproportionately impact rural communities.

DeJoy has said the change is a key part of his 10-year plan to fix USPS' finances and operations, noting it would save between \$3.6 billion and \$3.7 billion annually. The initiative to allow mail to sit overnight at post offices will itself account for \$651 million in savings, per USPS estimates.

In the pilot phase of the initiative, which affected 15 regions across the country, transportation costs actually increased by \$7 million, the IG found. The auditors called on USPS to better track its cost savings, noting the agency had not implemented any analysis at the time of its review, and postal management agreed to do so.

USPS leadership added that it expects costs to stabilize as the initiative matures and said it had to award emergency contracts and add staff in some cases due to unexpected per-

formance issues. The changes impacted five times as many rural mailers as urban ones and complaints from postal customers spiked. Some employees even took to instructing customers to take their mail to facilities unimpacted by the changes to ensure speedy mail delivery.

The IG faulted USPS for failing to adequately notify customers of the reforms and management said they would ensure better engagement going forward. The auditors cautioned the plan could have a widespread impact on postal business.

The changes may ultimately "reflect negatively on the Postal Service brand and goodwill, impact public perception, and potentially drive customers to alternative sources for their mailing needs," the IG said.

Postal officials acknowledged they cannot implement all of their reforms without slowing mail for some and are asking the Postal Regulatory Commission for an advisory opinion on a proposal to expand the initiative.

have yet to see it."

Robert Taub, now PRC's vice chair, noted he would have hoped to see more progress by the fourth year of DeJoy's vision taking effect.

"If there is a status quo, the status quo seems to be the Delivering For America plan and its continuation," Taub said, "and it concerns me because it reminds me of the old quote of the definition of insanity is continuing to do the same thing and expect a different result."

PRC is expected to issue its opinion this month, though its ruling is non-binding. The commission has repeatedly expressed concern over DeJoy's reforms and earlier last year called on him to pause all changes to his network.

DeJoy has also faced bipartisan pushback from lawmakers over his RTO initiative, including at recent congressional hearings that turned testy. DeJoy vehemently defended his efforts during hearings last month

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by  
Dustin  
Hume

**EDITOR**

## Let Your Voice Be Heard

Let your voice be heard, submit an article! Do you have a topic that is important to you and would like to share it with other members? Any news coming out of your area that you would like to share? Send

an article in! This paper belongs to the members. It is your voice. With the political climate we are in and the foreseeable attacks on the future of the Postal Service, now is the time to use your voice.





## MVS CRAFT DIRECTOR

# MVS State Of The Union Address

by Albert 'Al' Lewis

Happy New Year to all members of the MPWU affiliated locals, especially those member in the MVS craft.

We are in for a challenging year as craft employees of APWU with the dangerous plan of the Network Optimization & Revitalization. We, as MVS employees (Drivers, Mechanics, Clerks, etc.) are under attack with planned consolidations of P&DC's, creation of RP&DCs, elimination of station pickups and stops, and continued contracting out of maintenance work due to the purchases of EV (electric vehicles), and no training for the certified mechanics to be able to service EV's and the new fleet of Tractors, 7/11-tons, pro-masters, FFV's and others.

I would like to briefly touch basis on a couple of things in this article that is vital to our solvency to counter this disastrous plan of reduction in workforce, First, MVS drivers: The importance of the performance of the PS Form 4533 (daily duty assignment/schedule). Performing your assignment daily is our lifeline, represents our jobs, literally. Following your schedule and operating instructions prevents them from eliminating stops, runs, jobs and proves our worth to the USPS. Without Drivers, the mail doesn't move. Craft directors, we must make sure drivers are utilizing PS Form 4572's (Tractor Logs) to track our miles, work and verify what we're doing, and make management dispatch these items to drivers daily.

In Detroit, performance of the Das 110 is extremely important, arbitration award routes returned to the craft from contractors. Craft Directors need to track the Job ID#s are attached to these duty assignments, position ID#s for your compliment, to make management fill vacancies and give conversion to full-time for PTF's. Scanning, drivers, use the scanner to arrive & depart on your schedule, proper training is still needed on all the functions and scans of this device, Management has violated the Step 4 on Scanning 2017, repeatedly and has moved forward with logistics using it for timekeeping entries, if you've filed grievance on this device, file again.

The VMF – Subcontracting of

work that should be performed in-house is always the biggest hurdle to climb. We must be willing to perform the work and file grievances to try to stop the subcontracting of the work, especially the big trucks (Tractors, 7/11-ton), track vacancies and force them to properly staff the VMFs. The switch from SEAMS to FMIS hasn't been very good due to the inefficient training or lack thereof in most places. FMIS is the new system for work orders on vehicles needing maintenance. Training in Oklahoma for the EV's is supposed to be offered to everyone, so ask VMF management if you're going to get your opportunity for training. Thanks, for your time reading & Listening, Albert 'Al' Lewis, MPWU MVS Director.

## — Article 10 Leave —

by Jeff Worden

For all members who work at a post office **without a Local Union Structure** here are the guidelines for Annual Leave for the year 2025.

a. The maximum number of days off for Choice vacation leave is governed by Article 10, sections 3.D and.2 of the 2021 National Agreement.

b. The choice vacation calendar will be placed on the employees' bulletin board no later than January 15th.

c. Choice vacation selections shall be made by seniority, among all APWU represented bargaining unit employees.

d. Choice vacation period shall be from March 1st through November 30th.

e. **Feb 1st** shall be the **final date** for employees to submit their request

(s) for choice vacation period (s). If the employee desires a copy of the approved leave request, the employee must **submit the request in duplicate**.

f. For choice vacation selections, a minimum of one (1) APWU represented bargaining unit employee within the installation by craft or a minimum of 15% of all APWU bargaining unit employees, by craft, if greater than the minimum of 1 will be allowed off each week during the choice vacation period. When calculating the minimum based on percentages, any fraction of a number ending in .5 or higher will be rounded off to the next whole number.

**Excluding the month of December, For INCIDENTAL ANNUAL LEAVE** requested during a leave year, a minimum of one (1) APWU represented bargaining unit employ-

ee within the installation, by craft, or a minimum of 15% of all bargaining unit employees, by craft, if greater than the minimum of 1, will be allowed off on annual leave at any one time.

APWU bargaining unit employees on choice vacation or incidental leave during the time period count towards the above minimums. When calculating the minimum based on percentages, any fraction of a number ending in .5 or higher will be rounded off to the next whole number.

Any request for incidental leave will be acted upon and returned to the employee **within 72 hours of receipt by management**, or the leave **will be considered approved**.

I have many questions regarding the above! It seems that in many instances the employee will submit a 3971 for INCIDENTAL Leave and place it on the supervisor/postmaster

desk and the 3971 sits there and sits there and sits there (in some instances for over a MONTH) until finally the postmaster/supervisor DISAPPROVES the 3971!

I have had some employees fill-out a 3971 and then scan/send that 3971 to their supervisor/postmaster. This proves/shows that the clerk had filled-out a 3971 and in fact had notified her supervisor/postmaster of his/her request! I have heard that some supervisors/postmasters are "holding up" on approving the 3971 until it gets closer to the date the clerk/s requested. This is WRONG! All 3971's are to be answered within 72 hrs.

If you do submit a 3971 and you do **not** receive an answer within 72 hours or if you have any problem with taking Annual Leave, just give a call to your Union Representative. Take Care.

## Fly Like An Eagle So They SAY, But In The Maintenance World It Is Now "Clean Like An Eagle."

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without either of these then your State Craft Director.

Now the second part of this huge program. As I mentioned in the above statement, erroneous information in, means crap spewed out! So many offices have staffing packages that are wrong. You see, every staffing package is supposed to be reviewed yearly. If your facility has had a furniture, carrier cases, machines, or all around building rearrangement it should be corrected to show any changes. Staffing changes, maybe you now have different cleaning equipment, a rider mower, or now you have a push. Maybe those pesky leaves that you have work orders for that take a few hours a week for 6-8 weeks is not listed in your package. If we can show that this is a

ongoing and continuous issue we can have that put into the staffing packages. You just have to do your due diligence of paying attention to your route sheets or work that you are instructed to do and document it. Most offices are only given 26 frequencies to do snow removal for your facility. Did you know that going out and shoveling for an hour in the am and then going out again the same day in the afternoon is not one frequency? That is 2, so you see how fast you can use up that measly 26 times and how fast you are then not showing the work you are actually doing? Some might not even have snow? You need to make sure you are aware of what is in your staffing package and make sure you understand what you are getting credit for and what you are not. Again, if you are not sure ask your

steward, they can get this information and help you better understand it. The more you know the better you will be able to do your job and make sure you

are getting proper credit for the work you are doing. Don't just sweep it under the rug. Pardon the Pun!

It's hammer time! Gotta Bolt.

## Retiree's Corner

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and said anyone standing in his way would bring about the end of the Postal Service.

Sen. Josh Hawley, R-Mo., became angry with DeJoy when discussing his plan to slow down delivery for some mail, which he said would disproportionately impact his constituents.

"I hate this plan and I'm going to do everything I can to kill it," Hawley said. He pledged to "go to the mat" on the

issue and work with everyone on the committee to sink DeJoy's plan, vowing to "go down with the ship" if necessary. The senator raised his voice and said he was no longer interested in being nice to DeJoy, was growing tired of his initiatives and had "waited and waited and waited" for improved performance.

"You won't go down with the ship," DeJoy responded. "If you're successful, the Postal Service will go down."

AREA 7 DIRECTOR



by  
Dana  
Mclean

# How To File A Grievance: A Quick Guide For APWU Members

As a proud member of the American Postal Workers Union (APWU), you have the right to file a grievance if you believe your rights under the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) are being violated. While filing a grievance might sound daunting, the process is simpler than you think. Here's a step-by-step guide to help you get started:

## 1. Identify the Issue

Start by determining whether the issue is a legitimate grievance. Common examples include:

- Violations of your contractual rights (e.g., improper scheduling, denied leave, or unsafe working conditions).
- Disciplinary actions you believe are unfair or unwarranted.
- Management's failure to follow proper procedures.

If you're unsure whether your situation qualifies, don't hesitate to reach out to your steward.

## 2. Act Quickly

Grievances have strict time limits, usually requiring them to be filed within 14 days of the incident. Don't delay — contact your steward as soon as possible to ensure your rights are protected.

## 3. Gather Evidence

The more information you provide, the stronger your grievance will be. Helpful evidence includes:

- Dates, times, and locations of incidents.
- Copies of relevant documents (e.g., schedules, leave requests, or disciplinary letters).
- Statements from witnesses or co-workers.
- Any applicable sections of the CBA.

Keep everything organized and provide copies to your steward.

## 4. Contact Your Steward

Your steward is your first point of contact for filing a grievance. They will:

- Help you determine if your issue is grievable.
- Assist in gathering and organizing evidence.
- File the grievance on your behalf.
- Represent you in discussions with management.

## 5. Participate in the Process

Stay involved throughout the grievance process. Be responsive to your steward's requests and attend any necessary meetings. Your input is crucial to achieving a positive resolution.

## 6. Trust the Process

The grievance process is designed to ensure fairness and accountability. While it may take time, remember

that your union is here to fight for your rights.

**Remember:** Filing a grievance isn't about creating conflict — it's about standing up for what's right and ensuring the contract is followed. If you ever feel uncertain or need assistance, your steward is just a call away. Together, we can uphold the standards that protect all APWU members.

### How to File a Grievance: A Quick Guide for APWU Members

As a proud member of the American Postal Workers Union (APWU), you have the right to file a grievance if you believe your rights under the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) are being violated. While filing a grievance might sound daunting, the process is simpler than you think. Here's a step-by-step guide to help you get started:

## 1. Identify the Issue

Start by determining whether the issue is a legitimate grievance. Common examples include:

- Violations of your contractual rights (e.g., improper scheduling, denied leave, or unsafe working conditions).
- Disciplinary actions you believe are unfair or unwarranted.
- Management's failure to follow proper procedures.

If you're unsure whether your situation qualifies, don't hesitate to reach out to your steward.

## 2. Act Quickly

Grievances have strict time limits, usually requiring them to be filed within 14 days of the incident. Don't delay—contact your steward as soon as possible to ensure your rights are protected. Write a statement with all the information, who, what, where, when the grievance occurred.

## 3. Contact Your Steward

Your steward is your first point of contact for filing a grievance. Here's what I, as your steward, will do to support you:

- **Review the Details:** I'll carefully review the information you provide to ensure the issue qualifies as a grievance and identify the best path forward.
- **Request for Information (RFI):** If needed, I'll submit an RFI to management. This formal request allows me to gather critical documents, such as work schedules, clock rings, or disciplinary records, that are necessary to build a strong case.
- **Understand the Local Memorandum of Understanding (LMOU):** I'll consult our LMOU, which outlines local agreements and policies that may impact your grievance. These

agreements cover issues like leave bidding, overtime assignments, or holiday scheduling, tailored to our office.

• **File the Grievance:** I will draft the grievance, clearly citing specific violations of the CBA and any relevant LMOU provisions, and submit it to management on your behalf.

• **Representation:** I'll represent you in grievance meetings, presenting your case and working to negotiate a fair resolution.

• **Keep You Informed:** Throughout the process, I will update you on any developments and discuss our strategy.

## 4. Participate in the Process

Stay involved throughout the grievance process. Be responsive to your steward's requests and attend any necessary meetings. Your input is crucial to achieving a positive resolution.

## 5. Trust the Process

The grievance process is designed to ensure fairness and accountability. While it may take time, remember that your union is here to fight for your rights.

**Remember:** Filing a grievance isn't about creating conflict — it's about standing up for what's right and ensuring the contract is followed. If you ever feel uncertain or need assistance, your steward is just a call away. Together,

we can uphold the standards that protect all APWU members.

### Office Visits This Spring

This spring, I will be conducting office visits to meet with members and address any concerns directly. If there are any specific issues or topics you'd like me to address during my visit to your office, please send me an email beforehand. This will help ensure I come prepared and can provide the best possible support. I look forward to connecting with you and working together to resolve any challenges.

### Contract Negotiations Update

As of now, there is no official word on the status of our negotiated contract. To stay updated on the latest developments, I encourage you to visit the APWU website. The site offers detailed and timely information about the progress of negotiations and how they may impact our membership.

### Looking Ahead to Spring

We've just made it through the busiest time of the year, and I want to thank everyone for their hard work and dedication. As we move into spring, I'm looking forward to a season of growth and progress for all of us. Let's work together to address any concerns and make this a great spring for every member.

In solidarity.

## USPS Board Of Governors Elects New Leadership

*continued from page 1*

to every door, without exception.

The Postal Board of Governors does not have the final say in how our mail runs — the people do. No matter

who Trump nominates to the Board, the APWU will keep fighting for the exceptional service and delivery standards our communities deserve. Stay tuned for more updates.



Michigan Messenger  
Deadline for  
Newsletter  
Submissions  
April 1, 2025

AREA 9 DIRECTOR

# Answering The Call: Why Younger Members Must Step Up In Their Union

by Brittany Thompson

The strength of any union lies within the membership, and the future of that union depends greatly on the next generation of leaders stepping up when it matters most. For years, experienced union stewards have been the backbone of labor advocacy, ensuring fair treatment, upholding workers' rights, and protecting the benefits we all relay on. However, as many of these seasoned leaders prepare for retirement, a new challenge emerges: who will take their places?

To younger union members: the time to get involved is now. The future of your workplace, your rights, and your benefits depend on you stepping forward to carry the torch. Here's why your involvement is essential and how you can make a difference. With a wave of retirement of our more seasoned members is headed our way, many long-time stewards have spent decades fighting for better wages, working conditions, and benefits. As they prepare to retire, they leave behind some big shoes to fill.

The rights and benefits you enjoy today—fair pay, reasonable hours, and safe working conditions—didn't come easily. They were fought for by generations of union members. By becoming more involved, you ensure that these gains aren't lost and that future workers can enjoy the same protections.

Younger members bring energy, new ideas and a fresh perspective that can help unions stay relevant in a rapidly changing world. Whether it's embracing technology, addressing issues like work-life balance, or advocating for mental health supports, your voice is crucial for the union's evolution. Unions are only as strong as their members. The more engaged and active younger members are, the stronger the union becomes. Your involvement helps ensure that the union will remain a powerful force for change, not just for today, but for generations to come.

If you're not sure where to start, or even how to

become more involved, start by attending union meetings, reading the newsletters that come out, and getting to know the issues your union is working on. Understanding the union's role and goals is the first step to becoming an active participant. Another way to become more active is to volunteer. Volunteering for committees is a great way for members to contribute and even meet other engaged members.

Seek out training opportunities, often there is training offered for members interested in becoming stewards. These programs are invaluable for learning about labor laws, grievance handling and

an impact. Don't be afraid to put yourself out there— you might be surprised at how much support you receive.

Becoming active in your union isn't just



about helping others—it's also an opportunity for personal growth. You'll gain valuable skills in leadership, communication, conflict resolution, and negotiation that will serve you well throughout your career. You'll also build a network of colleagues who share your values and commitment to

negotiation tactics.

Take advantage of the knowledge and experience of retiring stewards while they're still here. I'm sure most of them would be happy to share

with you and even help you with anything you need. Whether it's becoming a shop steward, joining the executive board, or chairing a committee, stepping into a leadership role is the most direct way to make

workplace fairness.

The Union has always been a collective effort, driven by members who believe in the power of solidarity. As the more experienced stewards pass the baton, the next generation must rise to the occasion. By getting involved now, you can honor their legacy while building a stronger more resilient union for the future. The future of YOUR workplace, and YOUR rights depends on YOU. Will you answer the call?

## Where Does The Word "Boycott" Come From?

For organized labor, the word "boycott" has a deep personal meaning—a call to stand by other workers in their times of trouble by refusing to give economic support to enemies of the labor movement.

Yet, relatively few know the meaning of the word and almost each generation of working men and women

must rediscover for itself how it got its start.

"Captain Boycott," written by Philip Rooney, an Irish author, takes the reader back to the 19th century. It was a time when absentee English landlords demanded fantastic rents from their impoverished farmer tenants in Ireland and turned them out of their homes when the rents were not paid.

Specifically, the story involves Captain Charles Boycott, a rental agent for the Earl of Erne who, more out of stupidity than viciousness, refused to accept the reasonable rents that were offered him and evicted his tenants when they refused to pay the inflated rents.

In reply, the embattled Irish farm workers isolated Captain Boycott in a way not only to hurt him economically, but to show their utmost contempt for him.

"No man would save the captain's crops," wrote Rooney. "No one would drive his cart, the smith would not

shoe his horses, the laundress would not wash for him, the grocer would not supply him with goods, the postman would not deliver his letters."

The device that the farmers used grew out of the advice of Charles Stewart Parnell, the great Irish patriot, who had denounced men who took over farms from which others had been evicted. Such a man, he said, in words that still burn, should be left severely alone "by putting him into a moral Coventry, by isolating him from his kind as if he was a leper of old."

"You must show him your detestation of the crime he has committed," Parnell concluded, "and you can be sure that there will be no man so full of avarice, so lost to shame, as to dare the public opinion of all right-thinking men and to transgress your unwritten code of law . . ."

Captain Boycott did dare to face the isolation that had been placed upon him. But he failed. He imported



laborers. He guarded them with British cavalry and infantry and constabulary. But he could not face forever the "detestation" of the Irish farm workers.

In the end he was forced to return to England, defeated and ruined. Behind him he left only the memory of his name. "A dreaded word" in the English language.

— The Communicator

**IF YOU FIND MISTAKES**  
in this publication, please consider that they are there for a purpose. We try to publish something for everyone, and some people are always looking for mistakes!



# APWU URGENT ACTION

Call your **senators** and urge them to **block** the takeover of the Postal Service by the White House and ensure the Postal Service remains independent!



**YES, the call can be made on USPS property during non-working hours**, such as before or after work and during your breaktime or lunch hour.

**YES, non-postal workers can make the call.** Ask your family, friends, and neighbors to call!

The public Postal Service is under attack. Major news sources are reporting an impending executive order that will fire the postal Board of Governors and absorb the USPS into the Commerce Department.

The law created the Postal Service as an independent agency, free from shifting political winds, and dedicated to serving the American public.

Any effort by the administration to remove the Board and seize USPS is clearly illegal and directly impacts the wages, benefits, and livelihoods of each and every postal worker. It directly threatens the right of the public to universal service.

Mark Dimondstein, *President*  
Judy Beard, *Legislative & Political Director*

*Updated February 21, 2025*

**CALL 844-402-1001 AND TELL YOUR SENATORS TO KEEP THE POSTAL SERVICE PUBLIC AND INDEPENDENT**

National Business Agent

Act Of God



by Linda Turney

When you read, you empower yourself. When you write, you empower others.

ELM Section 519.215. has language concerning Act of God. It provides that bargaining unit employees may receive administrative leave when they are unable to report to work or are prevented from working due to sudden, severe, and unpreventable natural events. The language states the employees may be excused per the following language:

a. Full-time and part-time regular employees receive administrative leave to cover their scheduled tour of duty not to exceed 8 hours.

b. Part-time flexible employees receive administrative leave, subject to the 8-hour limitation, for their scheduled workhours, as provided in 519.214c. Section 519.211 defines acts of God: Acts of God involve community disas-

ters such as fire, flood, or storms. The disaster situation must be general rather than personal in scope and impact. It must prevent groups of employees from working or reporting to work. ELM, Section 519.211 establishes that we must prove three things.

1. It must create a community disaster; the event must be general rather than personal. I cannot get out of my driveway because of the snow but the snow must be everywhere so deep that the community is shut down. Can my neighbor down the street get out of the

means that it was inevitable, and the event caused by no direct human action (e.g. severe or extreme weather and other natural disasters) for which an individual person(s) cannot be held responsible for not being at work.

3. What direct impact did the event have on the community? How did the general population react? Evidence to establish that the impact of the catastrophic event was not limited to the Postal Service but rather overwhelmed the community should be included in the grievance file. Public Schools are all

status. They are not entitled to administrative leave.

Was the snow so bad that the trucks could not make to the office? There is no productive work available. Section 519.214 addresses early dismissal due to an act of God:

519.214 Early Dismissal Due to Acts of God Dismissal of employees from duty before the normal completion of their duty due to an act of God, the following applies:

a. Full-time employees are entitled to credit for hours worked plus enough administrative leave to complete their tour of duty. This combination of work and leave is not to exceed 8 hours in any one day.

b. Part-time regular employees are entitled to credit for hours worked plus enough administrative leave to complete their scheduled hours of duty. This combination of work and leave is not to exceed 8 hours in any one day.

c. Part-time flexible employees are entitled to credit for hours worked plus enough administrative leave to complete their scheduled tour. The combination of straight time worked, and administrative leave may not exceed 8 hours in a service day. If there is a question as to the scheduled workhours, the part-time flexible employee is entitled to the greater of the following:

1. The number of hours the part-time flexible worked on the same service day in the earlier service week.

2. The number of hours the part-time flexible was scheduled to work.

3. The guaranteed hours as provided in the applicable national agreement.

When employees are dismissed from duty before the normal completion of their duty due to an act of God, the following applies: a. Full-time employees are entitled to credit for hours worked plus enough administrative leave to complete their tour of duty. This combination of work and leave is not to exceed 8 hours in any one day.

Once employees report to work, management must pay them their respective guarantees if they go home.

Employees do not have to take annual leave if sent home. Always use PS Form 3971, Request for or Notification of Absence, to request administrative leave in such a situation. The PS Form 3971 always documents that the employee request was made and proves that management sent them home.

When management denies Administrative Leave, the Union has the burden of proof. Get documents, interview people and written statements from those affected to sustain your burden. Your NBA.

“The disaster situation must be general rather than personal in scope and impact. It must prevent groups of employees from working or reporting to work.”

driveway? Has the entire road been shut down? Proving that I cannot get out of my driveway means that it was a personal event. Get local newspaper articles or print out online reports about the community being shut down.

2. It requires acts of God be general in scope and impact. General in scope

closed. Were there wind fires such as what we have seen in California. Has there been torrents of water that have created flooding that has affected everyone in the community?

4. Did the disaster affect groups of employees. Arbitrators often require that 50 percent or more of the employ-

ees are unable to come to work because of conditions. If management states that in the grievance process, stewards should argue that other arbitrators have pointed out that the language does not establish such arbitrary limits, and that the fact circumstances of each case must be considered. Put in Requests for Information (RFI) to document the number of employees who were able to report that day or at that time and these records will also prove what kind of leave was charged for the absences. If more than 50% were not able to get to work, document it by requesting the total number of people in the office and how many people were not there do to the disaster.

Get statements from employees that were unable to work. Did they request Administrative Leave for an Act of God? Or did they say they were sick? If they said they were sick, we cannot use their statements. Ask the employee to explain their attempts to get to work during the event. ELM, Section 519.216 states: Employees on annual leave, sick leave, or LWOP remain in such

