



American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

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Editor
The Washington Times
3600 New York Ave, NE
Washington DC 20002

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To the Editor:

Rep. Issa's Sept. 20 article, "*Time for another government bailout*," includes so many inaccuracies about the state of the Postal Service that I hardly know where to begin. Frankly, it appears to be nothing more than a political attack on government workers and labor unions.

For the record, the facts are as follows:

- The Postal Service does not need a bailout, and no one has requested one – not the USPS, not its customers, not its unions, and not Democratic lawmakers.
- Two independent and respected auditors concluded that the Postal Service has overfunded its retirement fund by \$50 billion to \$75 billion. If the USPS were permitted to apply the overpayments to future liabilities, which the agency is required to pre-fund under the terms of the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006, the agency's financial crisis would be resolved.
- Mail volume reached its peak in 2006, long after the advent of the Internet and e-mail. The recession is a major reason for the reduction in commercial mail.
- Labor costs, which postal management claims accounts for 78 percent of revenue includes the salary and benefits of more than 87,000 postal employees that are not covered by labor contracts – the postmaster general, his staff, tens of thousands of postmasters and supervisors, as well as private contractors.
- Contrary to Rep. Issa's assertion, the APWU contract, which covers the largest bargaining unit in the Postal Service and in the United States, permits layoffs of surplus employees.
- Despite his claim, postal unions have not "balked at the idea of changing contracts that refuse to allow necessary layoffs even if workers would be offered the opportunity to be retrained and fill other positions in the federal government." The APWU is presently bargaining with the Postal Service, but we have not yet been presented with management's proposals on this topic. Without any investigation, Rep. Issa's article blithely predicts the union's reaction to contract proposals that have not yet been made.

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- Postal costs have been cut in the amount of \$3 billion in 2010 alone, and approximately 213,000 positions have been eliminated since 2001.

How unfortunate that Rep. Issa neglected to get the facts straight before denigrating the 600,000 men and women who operate the largest, most efficient and least expensive mail system in the world.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William Burrus". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "B".

William Burrus
President