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**NEWS SERVICE**

AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION, AFL-CIO Headquarters: 1300 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005

**Law Professor Stephen B. Goldberg Will Serve as Neutral Arbitrator**

# Arbitration Panel Selected For National Agreement

APWU and Postal Service representatives completed the neutral arbitrator selection process on June 27, 2001 by striking all but one name from the list of potential arbitrators. The arbitrator selected is Stephen B. Goldberg, a Professor of Law at Northwestern University Law School in Chicago, IL. Professor Goldberg is also president of Mediation Research and Education Project, Inc.; a member of the Center for Public Resources Panel of Distinguished Neutrals; and a court-appointed special master for several courts.

The APWU and the Postal Service also announced their party-appointed arbitrators. The APWU's party-appointed arbitrator will be Professor Carin Ann Clauss of the University of Wisconsin. Professor Clauss served as Solicitor of Labor, the highest ranking attorney in the US Department of Labor, during the Carter Administration. Before that, she served as Associate Solicitor of Labor for Fair Labor Standards. In that capacity, she was responsible for enforcement of the Equal Pay Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, and the Age Discrimination in

Employment Act, among others.

The Postal Service's party-appointed arbitrator will be Mr. Robert Dufek, who is a partner in the Washington, DC, management labor law firm Morgan, Lewis & Bockius. Mr. Dufek is a graduate of Georgetown University Law School, where he is now a member of the adjunct faculty.

As the next step in the process, the party-appointed arbitrators will contact Professor Goldberg to schedule hearings.

**Ask Your Senators and Representative to Cosponsor Bills**

## Government Pension Offset Bills Gain Momentum

Two Government Pension Offset (GPO) bills, HR 664 in the House of Representatives and S 611 in the US Senate, have gained considerable momentum in this session of the 107th Congress.

HR 664 was introduced by Rep. William Jefferson (D-LA) and S 611 was introduced in the Senate by Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-MD). These bills would remove the Government Pension Offset for anyone whose combined government pension or annuity and spousal Social Security benefit is less than \$1,200 per month.

**What is the Government Pension Offset?**

The law affects Social Security benefits you receive as a spouse or widow. Social Security spouse's or widow's benefits may be offset if you receive a pension from a job where you did not pay Social Security taxes, otherwise known as the Government Pension Offset.

The offset will reduce the amount of your Social Security spouse's or widow's benefit by two-thirds of the amount of your government pension. If you get a monthly civil service pension of \$600, two-thirds of that, or \$400, must be used to offset your spouse or widow's Social Security benefit.

**Why is there an offset?**

The Social Security spouse's benefit provides

income to wives and husbands who have little or no Social Security income. Since the beginning of the Social Security program in 1935, spouse's benefits were intended for women and men who were financially dependent on their husbands or wives who worked at jobs covered by Social Security.

If a person collects a Social Security benefit of \$800 per month, the spouse is potentially eligible for the spouse benefit up to 50 percent of that benefit, or \$400. However, if the spouse also worked and paid into Social Security, qualifying for their own retirement benefit of \$600, they will not receive any spouse's benefit because their \$600 retirement benefit offset their \$400 spousal benefit. When you are eligible for two Social Security benefits, you generally get the higher of the two, not both.

The GPO bills have attracted wide bipartisan support. HR 664, introduced by Jefferson, has 238 cosponsors, and S 611, introduced by Mikulski, has 21 cosponsors.

**APWU Action Needed**

Since Social Security reform may be considered by this Congress, it is essential that long-simmering issues of inequality be addressed. All APWU members are urged to write their representative to ask them to cosponsor HR 664, and to their senators to cosponsor S 611.

**August 26-28, 2001, in Washington, DC**

## APWU Retirement Counseling Seminar

The American Postal Workers Union Retirees Department, under the direction of John R. Smith, with assistance from Research and Education Department Director Joyce B. Robinson, will conduct a Retirement Counseling Seminar in Washington, DC from Sunday, August 26 through Tuesday, August 28, 2001. The seminar is a three-day program designed to train local and state retirement counselors to assist members on issues related to the Civil Service and Federal Employees Retirement Systems.

**Hotel Accommodations**

The seminar will be held at the Washington Court Hotel, 525 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20001. For reservations, telephone the hotel directly at 202-628-2100, or toll-free at 800-321-3010. The room rate is \$119, plus 14.5 percent tax, for single or double occupancy. To secure the special rate, please inform the hotel that you are with the American Postal Workers Union. The deadline to reserve hotel rooms is Friday, August 3, 2001.

All hotel reservations must be guaranteed with an

advance deposit or major credit card. Any cancellations must be made **no later than 48 hours prior to scheduled arrival**. Individuals who cancel their room reservations within 48 hours will be billed one night's room and tax.

Check-in time is 4:00 pm. Parking is by valet service and is \$15 per day and \$20 for overnight parking.

**Registration**

The registration fee is \$70 for each participant. Included in the fee are two coffee breaks daily and a luncheon. All participants must arrive at the hotel on **Sunday, August 26 no later than 12:00 noon to register. The seminar will convene promptly at 1:00 pm on Sunday and will adjourn no later than 3:00 pm on Tuesday.**

To register for the seminar, please complete the registration form below. **All participants must pre-register prior to the Friday, August 3, 2001 deadline. No walk-ins will be allowed.**

For more information, contact the APWU Research and Education Department at 202-842-4225.

**APWU Retirement Counseling Seminar  
Washington, DC, Sunday, August 26-Tuesday, August 28, 2001**

(Please type or print)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security No. \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Work) \_\_\_\_\_

Local \_\_\_\_\_ Hours of Work \_\_\_\_\_

Deadline to register for seminar: Friday, August 3, 2001

Mail this form with a check or money order for \$70 (made payable to "APWU Retirement Counseling Seminar") by **Friday, August 3, to: APWU Research and Education Department, Attn: Joyce B. Robinson, Director, 1300 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005**

# APWU Officer and Shop Steward Training Conference

The Research and Education Department of the American Postal Workers Union will conduct an Officer and Shop Steward Training Conference in Washington, DC, Monday, August 20-Sunday, August 26, 2001. The conference is a week-long program and is designed to acquaint newly elected APWU local and state officers and shop stewards with the skills needed to function effectively in their positions.

To register for the conference, please complete the registration form below. **All participants must pre-register prior to the Friday, August 3, 2001 deadline. No walk-ins will be allowed.**

The registration fee is \$100 for each participant. Included in the fee is a reception, two coffee breaks daily and a graduation breakfast. All participants must arrive at the hotel on **Monday, August 20 no later than 6:00 pm to register. The conference will convene at 6:30 pm on Monday and will adjourn no later than 12:00 noon on Sunday.**

## Curriculum

Participants must be in attendance for the entire week and attend all classes daily to receive a certificate. APWU officers and staff, and professional instructors from universities or agencies, will conduct the classes.

The classes are: Basic Shop Steward Training, Advanced Steward Training, Internal/External Organizing, The Fundamentals of Labor Law, Civil Service & Federal Employees' Retirement System,

Coping with Stress, Parliamentary Procedure, Understanding the Family & Medical Leave Act, Stopping Sexual Harassment, Staffing in Stations, Branches & Smaller Offices, Interrogation by the Postal Inspection Service, Safety and Health Committees, OSHA in the Postal Service, APWU Legislative Issues & Political Training, Filing OWCP Claims and Conducting Local/State Elections.

## Hotel Accommodations

The Officer and Shop Steward Training Conference will take place at the Washington Court Hotel, 525 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20001. The phone number is **202-628-2100**; or toll-free **800-321-3010**.

The room rate is \$119, plus 14.5 percent tax, for single/double occupancy. To secure the special rate, please inform the hotel that you are with the American Postal Workers Union. The deadline to reserve hotel rooms is Friday, August 3, 2001.

All hotel reservations must be guaranteed with an advance deposit or major credit card. Any cancellations must be made **no later than 48 hours prior to scheduled arrival. Individuals who cancel their room reservations with less than 48 hours' notice will be billed one night's room and tax.**

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Mail this form with a check or money order for \$100, (made payable to "APWU Officer and Shop Steward Conference") by **Friday, August 3 to: APWU Research and Education Department**  
Attn: Joyce B. Robinson, Director  
1300 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005

## Contact Your Senators

# Support Grows for Resolution on Six-Day Delivery

**Senate support for S.RES.71, the six-day mail delivery resolution introduced by Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA), continues to grow.**

At last count, 42 US senators have agreed to cosponsor S.RES.71. They are as follows:

Akaka (D-HI)	Corzine (D-NJ)	Jeffords (I-VT)
Baucus (D-MT)	Daschle (D-SD)	Johnson (D-SD)
Bayh (D-IN)	Dayton (D-MN)	Kennedy (D-MA)
Biden (D-DE)	Dorgan (D-ND)	Kerry (D-MA)
Bingaman (D-NM)	Durbin (D-IL)	Kohl (D-WI)
Boxer (D-CA)	Edwards (D-NC)	Landrieu (D-LA)
Carnahan (D-MO)	Feingold (D-WI)	Leahy (D-VT)
Cleland (D-GA)	Feinstein (D-CA)	Levin (D-MI)
Clinton (D-NY)	B. Graham (D-FL)	Lieberman (D-CT)
Collins (R-ME)	Harkin (D-IA)	Mikulski (D-MD)
Conrad (D-ND)	Inouye (D-HI)	Murray (D-WA)

Ben Nelson (D-NE)	Reid (N-NV)	Torricelli (D-NJ)
Bill Nelson (D-FL)	Sarbanes (D-MD)	Wellstone (D-MN)
Reed (D-RI)	Stabenow (D-MI)	Wyden (D-OR)

## APWU Action Needed

If your senators have cosponsored S.RES.71, please call or write to thank them for supporting essential six-day mail delivery. If your senators are not cosponsors, please call or write and ask them to cosponsor S.RES.71 as soon as possible. America needs six-day mail delivery—and the American Postal Workers Union wants to continue to provide America with the best postal service in the world!

The Capitol switchboard number is 202-224-3121.

## Department of Labor to Hold Three Public Forums

# Ergonomics Forums Are a Sham!

**On June 7, 2001, Labor Secretary Elaine Chao announced that she will convene three national public forums on the issue of ergonomic safety in the workplace, and will identify a final course of action by September.**

The forums will be held in Washington, DC on July 16; in Chicago, IL on July 20; and in California on July 24, 2001.

Chao identified before Congress a set of principles that the Department of Labor (DOL) will use as a starting point for creating a new ergonomics approach. The principles are outlined below:

1. Prevention: The approach should focus efforts on preventing injuries before they occur.
2. Sound science: Any DOL action should be based on the best available science and research.
3. Incentive-driven: The approach should be centered on cooperation between the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and employers.
4. Flexibility: The approach should take into account the varying capabilities and characteristics of different businesses.
5. Feasibility: Future actions must recognize the costs of compliance of small business.
6. Clarity: Any approach must include short, simple and common sense instructions.

## 'A Sham and a Fraud'

On behalf of working Americans, the AFL-CIO immediately declared the DOL's ergonomics forums one-sided and a fraud.

A statement released by the labor organization said, "It is clear that these forums are a sham and a fraud backed by industry and Republicans in Congress. The questions being asked by DOL are one-sided, reflecting only concerns and issues raised by industry opponents. These questions have been asked and answered, not just by NIOSH [National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health] and two congressionally mandated National Academy of Sciences reports, but through 10 weeks and 18,000 pages of public hearing testimony that ended just over a year ago, as well as hundreds of thousands of pages of additional records collected over ten years that rest in the OSHA ergonomics docket right down the hall from the Secretary.

"The questions DOL is asking are clearly an attempt to attack not only the science behind ergonomics, but on how ergonomic injuries are counted and recorded. NAM [National Association of Manufacturers] has challenged OSHA's revised recordkeeping rule and wants DOL to change the way MSDs [musculoskeletal disorders] are recorded in order to define the problem away. It appears that DOL may be using these forums as justification to do exactly that. . . .

"The only question that needs to be answered now, but was not even asked by Chao, is, 'What should OSHA do now to protect workers?' Meanwhile, while DOL fiddles, over 400,000 workers have suffered ergonomic injuries since George W. Bush signed legislation repealing the ergonomics standard last March."