

Mailing Industry: Commi

Not so long after the latest version of postal “reform” legislation stalled in Congress last year, mailing industry leaders began pressing the Bush Administration to create a presidential commission to give momentum to their agenda for the Postal Service.

“As members of the recently formed Mailing Industry CEO Council, we are writing to express our support for the concept of a Presidential Postal Commission,” the heads of the nation’s largest mailers, contractors, and presort houses wrote to President Bush on Oct. 30, 2002.

“It is increasingly clear,” the mailers wrote, “that we need a Presidential Postal Commission to jump-start the legislative process. ... We stand ready to assist you and your staff in any way possible.”

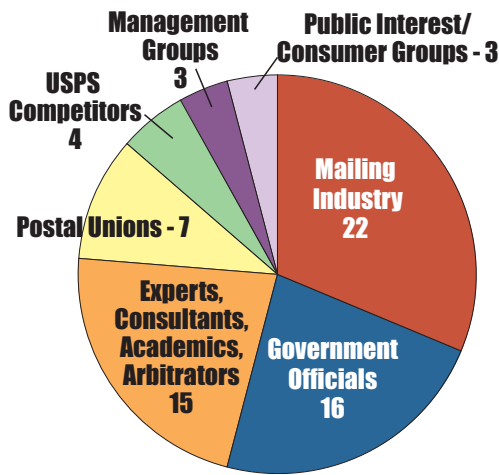
And the mailers certainly did “assist,” judging from the thousands of pages of testimony they submitted, the scores of witnesses and consultants they provided, and the dozens of private meetings they conducted with individual commissioners during the panel’s official seven-month tenure.

Mailers Have Their Say

Mailing industry executives seem happy with the results of the commission’s work. The chart below shows how the mailers dominated participation in public testimony and private meetings. On the next page is a sampling of their reaction to the final report.

Stakeholders’ Input to Presidential Commission’s Deliberations

WITNESSES INVITED TO TESTIFY



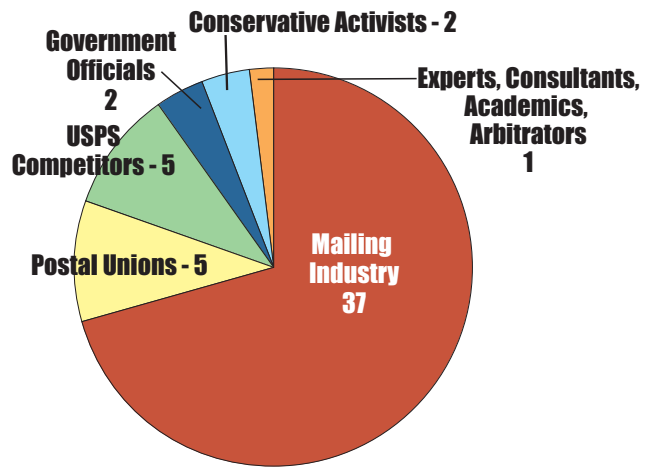
Mailing Industry – Presort houses, marketing associations, contractors, etc.

Government Officials – USPS, Postal Rate Commission, Treasury Department, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and Government Accounting Office (GAO) officials.

Experts, Consultants, Academics, Arbitrators – Includes several conservative professors who favor privatization and wage and benefit cuts for postal workers.

Postal Unions – APWU, National Association of Letter Carriers, National Postal Mail Handlers Union, National Rural Letter Carriers Association.

PRIVATE MEETINGS WITH COMMISSIONERS



Management Groups – Postmasters’ and supervisors’ associations.

USPS Competitors – FedEx, United Parcel Service, Airborne Express.

Conservative Activists – Americans for Tax Reform and the Lexington Institute. (No conservative activists testified publicly, but the Heritage Foundation and nine other right-wing organizations submitted written comments.)

Public Interest/Consumer Groups – Consumer Alliance for Postal Services (CAPS), Consumer Action, 60 Plus Association.

Commission Delivered for Us

“The Commission agreed with the CEO Council that private-sector partnerships, work-sharing, and outsourcing produce the most cost-effective postal system, and that USPS-industry collaboration should be maximized to drive innovation and to benefit users of all mail services... We are deeply grateful.”

– Michael J. Critelli, chief executive officer of Pitney Bowes, chairman of the Mailing Industry CEO Council

“We are pleased that many aspects of the Commission’s report reflect suggestions we made.”

– Jerry Cerasale, senior vice president for government affairs, Direct Marketing Association

“A truly outstanding piece of work”

– Magazine Publishers of America

“The Postal Service could finally have the ability to control costs by trimming its bloated infrastructure and workforce. We applaud the commission’s recommendations, and we are gratified that after careful and thorough research, and much discussion, they have come to many of the same conclusions that we came to seven years ago.”

– Gordon Hughes, president, American Business Mailers, a trade association of magazine publishers

“We encourage the Bush Administration and Congress to act with all due speed to put these recommendations into effect.”

– Charles Morgan, president of Acxiom, a marketing services company, and member of the Mailing Industry CEO Council

APWU Fights Back

The APWU is ramping up its efforts to convince Congress and the American public that the presidential commission’s proposals are bad for postal workers, bad for the Postal Service, and bad for consumers.

COPA Fund-Raising: In April, President Burrus kicked off a campaign to raise an unprecedented amount for the union’s political war chest to be used to help congressional candidates who stand up for postal workers. (See pages 24-25.)

Media Outreach: President Burrus held an impromptu press conference to condemn the commission’s report, and has shared his views on network news and radio talk shows. In addition, many APWU members and local officers have had editorials and letters about postal “reform” published in newspapers.

Ad Campaign: The Consumer Alliance for Postal Services (CAPS), which the APWU supports, launched a TV and radio advertising campaign to preserve the nation’s mail-delivery system as we know it. The ads, targeted to areas represented by influential lawmakers, first ran in Waco, TX. (See page 7.)

Building Coalitions: As a member of CAPS, the APWU has joined forces with other organizations representing

millions of Americans to fight the dismantling of the Postal Service. Many locals are building similar coalitions in their communities.

Lobbying Congress: APWU locals have already met with U.S. Senators and Representatives to discuss the commission’s proposals.

Special Report to APWU Members: A videotape of President Burrus discussing the commission’s proposals was mailed to every local, state, retiree, and auxiliary chapter. It should be reviewed at union meetings, conferences, and other events, as well as in swing rooms, cafeterias, and other places where workers congregate.

Union Solidarity: At the request of the APWU and the National Association of Letter Carriers, the AFL-CIO passed a resolution condemning the commission’s efforts to undermine “the wages, benefits, and economic security of postal employees.”

The Grassroots Agenda: In addition to contributing to COPA, every APWU member is being asked to make his or her voice heard by contacting elected officials and the media, and by talking with friends, neighbors, and community organizations about the commission’s plans. (See pages 26-27.)