

Labor rallies against Postal Service slowdowns, calls for DeJoy's ouster

More than two dozen union members and community allies rallied at the East Portland Post Office Oct. 1 to protest the first day of Postmaster General Louis DeJoy's new 10-year plan for the U.S. Postal Service (USPS). DeJoy, an ally of former President Donald Trump, is implementing a plan that will slow down First Class and parcel deliveries from the current three days to five days, raise prices, close and cut post offices, outsource postal work, and ultimately put the agency on a path to privatization.

"Hey! Hey!Ho! Ho!, Louis DeJoy has got to go!," the crowd chanted.

USPS is a service to the American people, said Daniel Cortez, legislative and political director American Postal Workers Union.

"The postal service should be doing everything in its power to make sure that medications, Christmas cards, ballots, and everything else reach their destination in as timely a manner as possible — not deliberately slowed down ...which is nothing short of the continued march to-



ward privatization and the dismantling of the second oldest federal institution in our country," said Cortez.

Processing centers in Eastern Oregon have already been dismantled, causing slower delivery times.

Oregon Congressman Earl Blumenauer, in a letter read by a staffer, reiterated his demand that DeJoy resign.

"For generations, our postal workers have provided affordable, reliable mail service that Oregonians have relied on — from everything from their pre-

scription drugs and Social Security checks, to their ballots and letters from loved ones," Blumenauer wrote. "DeJoy's plan strays from the agency's commitment to serve the public good, and further erodes service standards."

Also speaking at the rally were Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury, County Commissioners Jessica Vega Pederson and Lori Stegmann, representatives from the Rural Organizing Project, Indivisible, Veterans for Peace, and Jobs with Justice.

Kafoury said USPS should be overseen by someone who both

understands and embraces the postal service's commitment to be prompt, reliable, and efficient. "The person who protects the integrity and solvency of the USPS should be someone who sees it for what it really is — a public service and not a private business. Postmaster General DeJoy is not that person, and that is obvious throughout the 10-year plan that goes into effect today."

DeJoy can only be fired by the USPS Board of Governors, the governing body of the agency. The Board consists of nine governors appointed by the President

and confirmed by the Senate. The governors select the Postmaster General, who serves at their pleasure for an indefinite term.

Six of the nine governors are Trump appointees, and three were appointed by President Joe Biden. Four governors are from the investment management/private equity field. The chair, Trump appointee Ron Bloom, is a managing partner at Brookfield Asset Management. He served for 13 years as a Special Assistant to the President of the United Steelworkers.

Biden appointee Anton Hajjar is a former general counsel to the American Postal Workers Union.

Each governor receives \$300 per day for not more than 42 days of meetings each year and travel expenses, in addition to an annual salary of \$30,000.

USPS receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations. Union officials say its financial woes are largely because of an onerous congressional mandate that requires the USPS to prefund retiree benefits decades in advance. -MG



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