

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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Opening Statement
Chairwoman Carolyn B. Maloney
Committee on Oversight and Reform
Full Committee Business Meeting – Postal Service Reform Act
May 13, 2021

This bill has been years in the making, and I'm proud to say that it is now bipartisan.

I want to thank Ranking Member Comer and his staff for working diligently with me to put together this bipartisan bill to help ensure the Postal Service can continue to operate for years to come.

Mr. Comer is a very tough negotiator, but he shares my desire to protect and improve the Postal Service, so after many weeks of discussions, we were able to come to a bipartisan agreement.

I would also like to thank Representatives Connolly, Lynch, and Lawrence for their partnership and dedication to getting this bill done. I could not have done this without their support, their wisdom, and their insight.

Finally, I would like to thank Congresswoman Foxx, who has not only agreed to cosponsor this bill, but will also be serving with me as co-chair of the new Postal Caucus we are forming.

I would also like to thank the staff on both sides of the aisle for their hard work on this important bill.

As we all know, the Postal Service is one of our nation's most vital and respected institutions.

It binds our nation together in the way that no other agency or organization does.

And this bill will put this vital institution on a sustainable financial footing for generations to come.

And we need to remember that during the COVID pandemic, essential postal workers were on the front-lines, and were the literal lifeline for many Americans. So they deserve our help.

In March, we held a hearing on a discussion draft of this important reform legislation. While the bill has changed to include other reforms since then, the foundational elements of the bill we discussed in March remain.

First, this bill would require Postal employees to enroll in Medicare when they are eligible.

All Postal employees already pay into Medicare through their careers, but not all retirees enroll when they reach 65.

In addition, the Postal Service has paid about \$35 billion into the program since 1983.

The bill would ensure that Postal Service employees can fully utilize the benefits that they've already paid for.

In fact, retirees who are already over 65 would be given a three-month period to enroll with no penalty.

This change does not cost American taxpayers a dime.

Second, the bill would eliminate the unfair requirement that the Postal Service prefund its retiree health benefits for 75 years into the future.

No private company or federal agency is required to comply with such a burdensome and unfair prefunding requirement.

Instead of requiring the Postal Service to prefund retiree health benefits for all current employees and retirees, the bill would require the Postal Service to pay a small yearly top-up payment to cover the actual costs incurred by retirees in that year.

This change will help reduce the burden on the Retiree Health Benefit Fund and help it remain solvent further into the future.

These two reforms alone would save the Postal Service about \$46 billion over 10 years.

In addition to these foundational reforms, this bill would provide Congress and the American people with additional transparency by requiring the Postal Service to develop an online, public-facing database that shows weekly service performance information—a great idea offered by Ranking Member Comer.

This will help Congress and the public react to future poor performance quickly and efficiently.

While I recognize that as this bill moves forward there will be the need for additional technical adjustments to ensure that Postal Service employee benefits are protected, the bipartisan reforms included in this bill will increase transparency, improve service, and put the Postal Service on more sustainable footing for years to come.

I urge all my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back.

And with that, I now recognize the distinguished Ranking Member, the gentleman from Kentucky, Mr. Comer.

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