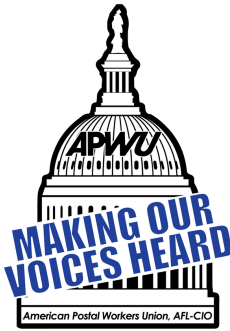


LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



EDITION
2023

American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

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Dear APWU Family,

Thank you for all you have helped us to accomplish on the legislative front over the last few years. Together, since the start of the pandemic, we have secured emergency COVID leave, passed historic postal reform over 15 years in the making, and invested in a green future through electric postal vehicles.

In 2020, we helped obtain up to 80 hours of paid sick leave in the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) for postal workers to care for themselves and loved ones during the height of the pandemic. Passed in 2022, the Postal Service Reform Act (PSRA) has significantly helped to relieve the Postal Service of financial hardship by repealing the 2006 pre-funding requirement that was strangling USPS. In addition to this repeal, the PSRA guarantees six-day delivery of letters and packages. When it comes to going electric, we worked together to win funding for electric postal vehicles and charging stations in the Inflation Reduction Act. It is clear that when Postal workers stand together, we are a formidable force.

Our fight for justice never ceases. In the 118th Congress, there are many new laws that must be enacted to preserve our democracy. The enclosed legislative priorities just scratch the surface of the issues that should be addressed in the next two years. Please feel free to disseminate our legislative priorities, such as the PRO Act and the Social Security Fairness Act, just to name a few, as broadly as you see fit. In addition to sharing them with lawmakers and their staff, these priorities can be posted on union bulletin boards, passed out at union meetings, and included in newsletters or on web pages.

To obtain additional copies and to ensure that you have the updated versions, please visit our Legislative and Political Department webpage at apwu.org. To learn about our immediate fight, please call our hotline at 844-402-1001 to call your members of Congress and urge their support for our issues. Feel free to share this number with co-workers, friends, and family.

Thank you again for the progress that has been made, as we simply could not have done it without your help!

Yours in Union Solidarity,



Judy Beard
Legislative and Political Director



LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

APWU SUPPORTS FAIR BENEFITS FOR AMERICA'S SENIORS

America's seniors have earned their benefits. The sad truth remains that despite their contributions, a law enacted in 1983 has placed an undue financial burden on many senior citizens.

THE SOCIAL SECURITY FAIRNESS ACT (H.R. 82, S.597)

*Lead Cosponsors: Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH)
and Rep. Garret Graves (R-LA-06)*

This bill, introduced in the House on January 9, 2023 and Senate on March 1, 2023, would repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO), which are parts of Social Security law that unfairly reduce, or sometimes eliminate, Social Security benefits for millions of federal annuitants.

The WEP formula reduces the Social Security benefits of those with pensions from employers who were not required to withhold Social Security taxes, but still qualify for Social

Security benefits through secondary employment.

This reduction can total up to fifty percent of the pension amount and directly impacts retirees under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) who currently have government pensions.

The GPO is similar to WEP, but affects spouses and widows(ers) of those receiving pensions from employers who were not required to withhold Social Security taxes.

This GPO reduction is equal to two thirds of the pension, making spousal and widow(er) benefits equal to only one third of what they should be.

Unfairly, the GPO and WEP penalize CSRS retirees that meet the requirements for Social Security benefits and have paid their fair share into the program.



Contact the APWU Legislative and Political Department at (202) 842-4211 for More Information
UPDATED: SPRING 2023

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

APWU SUPPORTS THE EXPANSION OF SENIOR BENEFITS

Social Security is a lifeline for millions of retired Americans. Seniors deserve increased benefits, with fair raises to Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLAs) based on calculations that adequately take into consideration the spending habits of seniors.

THE SOCIAL SECURITY EXPANSION ACT (H.R. 1046, S.393)

*Lead Cosponsors: Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and
Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL-09)*

This bill, introduced in the Senate on February 13, 2023 and in the House on February 14, 2023, would strengthen and enhance Social Security. More specifically, the bill would:

- Raise Social Security benefits by \$200/month or \$2400/year
- Lift the cap on Social Security taxes for all income above \$250,000
- Increase COLAs by using the Consumer Price Index for the Elderly (CPI-E)
- Reinstitute student benefits for children of deceased or disabled workers
- Make the Special Minimum Benefit 125% of the poverty line

Currently, there is a cap on income that is subject to Social Security payroll taxes. In 2023, the cap is \$160,200 per year.

Because of this cap, an individual making \$2 million a year pays the same amount as an individual making \$160,200.

One provision of this bill would end this

tax handout to the wealthy and require all income above \$250,000 to be taxed to fund Social Security.

Another element of this proposed legislation is to adjust how COLAs are calculated. The Consumer Price Index for the Elderly would account for the disproportionate healthcare and prescription drug costs that seniors face.

This bill would increase Social Security payouts, restart lost benefits, and lift Americans out of poverty through forcing the extremely wealthy to pay the same tax rate as the average employee. Because the bill would force the billionaire class to pay their fair share, Senator Sanders estimates that this bill will make Social Security solvent for over 70 years, until 2096.



LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

APWU SUPPORTS EQUITABLE FEDERAL EMPLOYEE COLAS

Those that retired under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) receive a Social Security Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) that is calculated differently than those that retired under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS). This calculation results in reduced COLAs for FERS annuitants, equaling up to one percent less than CSRS COLAs.

THE EQUAL COLA ACT (H.R. 866)

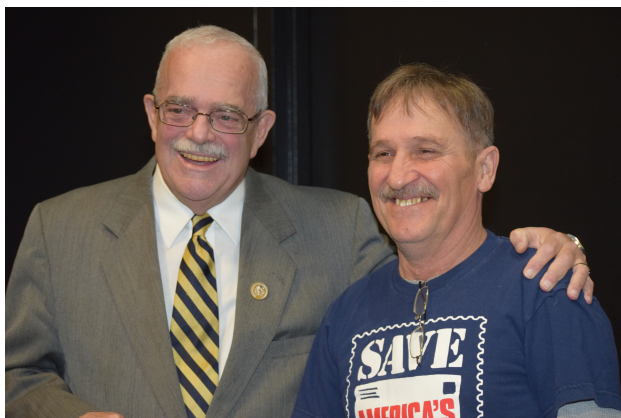
Lead Cosponsor: Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-VA-11)

This bill, introduced in the House on February 8, 2023, would fix this COLA discrepancy created in the 1980s. Under the current system, all COLAs are based on the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). If this increase is under two percent, CSRS and FERS retirees receive the same COLA. However, if the U.S. experiences high levels of inflation, unlike CSRS annuitants, FERS annuitants do not receive their full COLA. More specifically:

- If the CPI increase is between two and three percent, FERS retirees receive a flat two percent increase.
- If the CPI increase is over three percent, one percent is subtracted from the CPI for FERS retirees.

For 2023, the CPI increased by 8.7% between the third quarters of 2021 and 2022. As a result, the CSRS retirees saw an 8.7% COLA, while FERS retirees received a 7.7% COLA. Although it may appear minor, one percentage point can equal tens of thousands of dollars over the course of an individual's retirement.

The Equal COLA Act will give both FERS and CSRS retirees COLAs based on the CPI. It is time we stop penalizing our seniors for their retirement system and give fair Cost-of-Living Adjustments to our retired federal employees!



Contact the APWU Legislative and Political Department at (202) 842-4211 for more information
UPDATED: SPRING 2023

American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

Mark Dimondstein, President

Judy Beard, Legislative & Political Director



LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

APWU SUPPORTS THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE

With union membership at an all-time low of 10.1% of the workforce, the share of income going to the top 1% has skyrocketed. Recognizing the importance of union membership and the security it provides, bi-partisan legislation was introduced that would increase access to unions in both the private and public sectors.

THE RICHARD L. TRUMKA PROTECTING THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE (PRO) ACT (H.R. 20, S.567)

*Lead Cosponsors: Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT),
Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA-03), and Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA-01)*

This bill, introduced in both the House and Senate on February 28, 2023, would vastly improve workers' rights across the country, make it easier to join unions, and increase penalties on employers who knowingly violate workers' rights.

The PRO Act strengthens current federal laws allowing workers to organize and join a union, and laws allowing them to bargain for better wages and benefits. Not only does the bill empower workers to form a union, it also aids in completing the initial collective bargaining agreement by mandating arbitration and mediation to resolve conflicts.

The bill also clarifies the right to strike, prohibits employers from permanently replacing striking employees, and penalizes employers that violate workers' rights. Monetary penalties, in conjunction with personal liability, will help ensure employers are held accountable for their injustices.

If passed, this bill would allow workers to eliminate current "right-to-work" laws, and guarantee the right to union organizing and collective bargaining. Today, even in non-"right-



to-work" states, union organizing campaigns are often met with severe pushback from employers and even illegal retaliation.

Additionally, the PRO Act would safeguard union elections by allowing employees to vote at a neutral location and refuse to attend employer-mandated anti-union meetings. Transparency is also a requirement under this bill, as workers must be informed of their rights and employers must disclose their union-busting consultant contracts.

Regardless of skill level, race, gender, or political affiliation, access to a union increases workers' pay, secures benefits, and creates safer working conditions. The PRO Act will strengthen the rights of workers, increase the financial growth of the middle class, and create an avenue for better working environments.

Contact the APWU Legislative and Political Department at (202) 842-4211 for More Information
UPDATED: SPRING 2023



LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

APWU SUPPORTS NATIONWIDE VOTE-BY-MAIL

Currently, only eight states have adopted automatic mail-in voting to registered voters and fifteen states require an excuse to request an absentee ballot. It is time to eliminate hurdles to exercising our constitutional right to vote and expand access to vote-by-mail to all Americans.

THE VOTE AT HOME ACT (H.R. 1439, S.700)

*Lead Cosponsors: Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR)
and Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR-03)*

This bill, introduced in the House and Senate on March 8, 2023, will allow every registered voter to receive a ballot via USPS. More specifically, it will:

- Require that all registered voters automatically receive their ballot in the mail prior to Election Day
 - Voters can return these using prepaid postage or drop boxes
- Require states register all citizens to vote who are already at the DMV
- Grant USPS funds to cover election mail costs
 - Less demand on polling places could result in reduced costs for states and shorter wait times

Americans will still be able to vote in person if they choose, but if this bill became law, they would have the option to vote from the comfort of their own home.

It is not always easy to make the time to go vote, especially for working families. Voting at home means less time at the polling place and more time to make

informed decisions about your vote.

This bill seeks to expand access to the ballot box for all, especially those with disabilities who may not be able to safely leave their home to vote.

Automatic voter registration will result in fewer voters being denied their right due to voter role purges or a missed registration window.

The 2022 elections illustrated the accessibility and security of vote-by-mail measures as approximately 35% of voters utilized this method and 99.8% of ballots were delivered from homes to election officials within just five days.

We must embrace vote-by-mail and ensure everyone can cast their ballot safely.





LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

APWU SUPPORTS IMPROVED USPS SERVICE STANDARDS

It is no secret that service standards at the Postal Service have been reduced, dating back over 10 years. Since July 2012, first class mail has gone from guaranteed overnight delivery in cities and towns with 2-3 day delivery across the country, to up to five day delivery within the contiguous United States.

HOUSE RESOLUTION 277

Lead Cosponsors: Rep. Don Bacon (R-NE-02) and Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-OH-09)

On April 6, 2023, Representative Don Bacon (R-NE-02), along with 20 other members of Congress from both sides of aisle, introduced House Resolution 277. This resolution expresses the collective view of the chamber that USPS must restore its service standards to those in effect as of July 1, 2012.

Degradations in service standards come from those claiming reduced mail speed will be a cost savings to the Postal Service. However, the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) has found that these reductions are unnecessary and the savings have been a small fraction of original estimates. In 2016 and 2017, for example, USPS only saved approximately one-twentieth of original projections.

Furthermore, reductions in mail speed drive away business and damage the reliability of USPS. The PRC found that when mail service slows, people use the mail less.

Restoring service standards is feasible with targeted investments. USPS should improve their network by reopening or repurposing existing facilities to ensure that the public can receive their mail in a timely manner.

Regardless of the business case made to increase service standards, the Postal Service mission is to "provide the nation with reliable, affordable, universal mail service." APWU continues to fight for a prompt, reliable, and efficient Postal Service and therefore supports this resolution in hopes that more members of Congress understand the value of these standards to all Americans.

House Resolution 277

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Postal Service should take all appropriate measures to restore service standards in effect as of July 1, 2012.

American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

Mark Dimondstein, President
Judy Beard, Legislative & Political Director



HOW TO FIND YOUR FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

STEP 1

Go to the following webpage tinyurl.com/2p8k8547
or use this QR code



STEP 2

Arrive at webpage
Type in your current address
Hit enter

Select a state

Search bills and legislators..

Find Your Legislators

Look your legislators up by address or use your current location.

1300 L St Washington, DC 20005

Search by Address

Use Current Location

Geolocation and map view powered by mapbox.

Contact the APWU Legislative and Political Department at (202) 842-4211 for More Information
UPDATED: SPRING 2023

American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO





Mark Dimondstein, President
Judy Beard, Legislative & Political Director



HOW TO FIND YOUR FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

STEP 3


You should see the following page with your local, state, and federal representation. Click on the representative you would like to contact.

NAME	PARTY	DISTRICT	CHAMBER
 Phil Mendelson	Democratic	Chairman	legislature
 Christina Henderson	Independent	At-Large	legislature
 Robert C. White, Jr.	Independent	At-Large	legislature
 Anita Bonds	Democratic	At-Large	legislature



Federal

NAME	PARTY	OFFICE
 Eleanor Holmes Norton	Democratic	U.S. House DC-AL

Geolocation and map view powered by  mapbox.

STEP 4

The contact page should look similar to this.



Phil Mendelson

District of Columbia • Councilmember • Democrat • Chairman

Online

EMAIL pmendelson@dccouncil.us

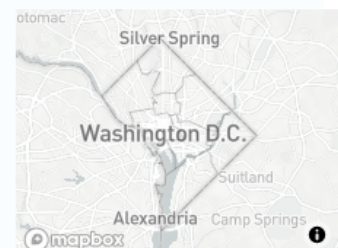
WEBSITE <http://dccouncil.us/council/phil-mendelson/>
<https://dccouncil.us/council/phil-mendelson/>
<https://dccouncil.us/council/phil-mendelson/homepage>

Capitol Office

1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 504
Washington, DC 20004

PHONE 202-724-8032 **FAX** 202-724-8085

SERVING CHAIRMAN



Contact the APWU Legislative and Political Department at (202) 842-4211 for More Information
UPDATED: SPRING 2023



HOW TO LOBBY

HOW TO SCHEDULE A MEETING

If speaking for the union, make sure you are working with your local, state, or retiree chapter president and legislative director.

While getting a meeting can be challenging, here are some tips to ensure you secure one:

- Call your local office and ask for the staffer that handles postal matters or the issue you want to meet on. If the staffer is unavailable, ask for their email address
- In your email to the office:
 - Identify yourself as a constituent and provide your address
 - State your role within APWU
 - Give them a **short** summary of what you want to discuss
 - Make a specific request for a meeting (via phone, Zoom, or in person)

Remember that persistence is key. If you don't receive a meeting right away, keep trying every 2-3 days.

Pro Tip: If you are unable to get a meeting, attend a public event with the elected official, such as a rally or town hall, and ask the member for a meeting directly.

HOW TO PREPARE

- Do your homework on the member
 - What are their policy positions?
 - What committees do they serve on?
- Know your issues
 - Obtain a copy of the APWU legislative priorities on our website
- Tailor your request to their position
- Think of a story that is personal, relevant, and took place in the district
- If there will be multiple people, assign roles early and meet in advance
- Practice your pitch

THE MEETING

- In advance of the meeting, send a note confirming the time and place, and listing the participant names, their titles, and district addresses
- Introduce yourselves and establish yourselves as leaders in your community
- Tell your relevant story and connect it to your issue
- Remember to be early

CLOSING THE DEAL

- Always make a direct ask
- Follow up with a thank you note:
 - Summarize your ask and explain how your ask is good policy
 - Thank them for their time
 - Reiterate any commitments made
 - Provide them with a digital copy of any legislative priority or other documents that support your ask