



STATEMENT OF

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INQUIRY ON FIVE-DAY DELIVERY PLAN**

**BEFORE THE
POSTAL REGULATORY COMMISSION**

**PUBLIC FIELD HEARING
MEMPHIS, TENNESSE**

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Good morning, Chairman Goldway and distinguished members of the Commission.

My name is Shri Green and I serve as the Cotton Belt Area Vice President for the National Association of Postal Supervisors. I live and work here in the Memphis area for the U.S. Postal Service and serve as a Network Operations Analyst, helping to route mail via surface and air transportation. My responsibilities as a NAPS Area Vice President for NAPS involve leading and representing the thousands of postal supervisors who live and work in Tennessee, Arkansas and Oklahoma. I appear before you today in my capacity as a NAPS official. The views I express are my personal views and those of the National Association of Postal Supervisors, not the U.S. Postal Service.

Thank you for holding this public hearing in Memphis to examine from a field-level perspective the service implications of reducing mail delivery from six days a week to five. I appreciate your diligence in holding hearings like this one as a part of a thorough review of the Postal Service's plan. Here in the Memphis area, the Postal Service accomplishes nearly 350,000 daily deliveries by city and rural letter carriers, through 13 stations and branches and eight finance units.

I bring a very skeptical view to the notion of reducing mail delivery from six days a week to five. My skepticism revolves around several concerns. Foremost among them is the impact that a reduction in delivery will have on the quality of the Postal Service brand and its reputation for high-quality service. By reducing the number of days of delivery, we will diminish the value of mail itself. There will undoubtedly be an erosion of confidence in the Postal Service's ability to provide the services the public relies on. Mailers ultimately will mail less, only compounding the problem. This, I fear, will have a cyclical and downward impact upon overall mail volume trends and harm the financial stability of the Postal Service.

While I appreciate the need for the Postal Service to find cost savings, I also know that the Postal Service's financial shortfalls in recent years have been principally due to the unrealistic schedule of down payments the Congress has required the Postal Service to make for future postal retiree health benefits. Without these payments, the Postal Service would be in a much more stable financial condition, not requiring a move as drastic as five-day delivery. The Congress must live up to its obligation to realign the Postal Service's retiree health benefit payment schedule to realistic levels – and credit to the Postal Service its pension overpayment for pre-1971-hired employees. Until the Congress takes these actions, I believe it is premature and unwise for the Postal Service to initiate five-day delivery. The Postmaster General even acknowledged in his recent Congressional testimony that if the prefunding and pension issues were satisfactorily resolved by Congress, the Postal Service would not be required to move to five-day delivery for at least another five years. Thus, five-day delivery should be the last resort by the Postal Service, not the first.

I recognize that the elimination of six-day delivery is not a new concept. It has been proposed many times and was the subject of considerable congressional review thirty years ago – and continuously rejected. I also recognize that some public opinion polls suggest that a majority of Americans today are willing to give up Saturday delivery. But those polls are questionable because they asked the public to express their preference between a variety of postal cutbacks, including raising stamp prices and closing post offices, in contrast to eliminating a day of delivery. Asking a question this way can create a biased result.

Even if you accept the polls for what they are, I suggest you look at them another way – since they tell us that as many as one-third of all Americans still favor the retention of Saturday delivery. One-third of the American population is a significant and critical part of the Postal Service's customer base. Few service companies would pursue a major change that is not supported by one-third of its

customer base. Our customers depend on the Postal Service to provide services they use and pay for, and if we don't, they will find someone else who will. That will only erode our customer base in the years ahead.

I want to emphasize that I am fully conscious that the Postal Service needs to live within its means. My work as a network operations analyst for the Postal Service requires finding the best, most cost-productive configurations of routes – both on land and in the air – for transporting mail to its delivery destination. My job continually involves finding ways to generate efficiencies and cost-savings.

But I am concerned that the savings that five-day delivery will purportedly yield will ultimately lead not to gains but to losses, not only in financial terms but in jobs as well. Our local economy, where unemployment is currently at 10.6 percent, cannot afford further job losses and pain. The elimination of a delivery day is sure to cause the elimination or relocation of numerous letter carrier and supervisor positions in Memphis. Within the past year, the Postal Service already reassigned 120 rank-and-file employees to locations outside Memphis. These changes rippled through the supervisory ranks as well. The elimination of a delivery day is sure to cause even greater dislocation at a time when we should be fostering job growth, not cutting back, in Memphis.

I urge the Commission to carefully scrutinize the Postal Service's five-day delivery proposal. Ultimately I believe you will find that the savings yielded will not be as significant as the Postal Service projects, that mail service will deteriorate, and that our local and national economy will be harmed.

Thank you for listening to my views.