



Postal Regulatory Commission

Postal Regulatory Commission
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Press Release

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Working for the People: 50 Years of Ensuring Transparency and Accountability of the U.S. Postal Service

Washington, DC — Today the Postal Regulatory Commission marks 50 years of public service in its mission to ensure transparency and accountability of one of our Nation's most valued treasures rooted in the Constitution — the U.S. Postal Service. President Richard M. Nixon signed into law the Postal Reorganization Act of 1970 on August 12 of that year. This momentous legislation would transform the Post Office Department into a newly independent Postal Service the following year. Yet the law immediately created the Postal Rate Commission as the 1970 Act ended the role of the U.S. Congress in setting stamp prices. Later, with passage of the Postal Accountability & Enhancement Act of 2006, the agency was renamed the Postal Regulatory Commission as part of significantly expanding its responsibilities.

For half a century, the Commission has been the regulatory anchor providing legal and economic oversight of the one agency that touches the lives of all Americans in every community nearly every day, at their homes and offices. Ever since Congress and President Nixon created it on August 12, 1970, the Commission has consistently conducted its work in an open and accessible way, with full transparency and an opportunity for robust input by the public. The agency's operations on behalf of its fellow citizens foster a vital and efficient universal mail system.

As an independent federal regulatory agency, the Commission is the regulator, not the operator, of the Postal Service. Unlike almost any other federal agency, the Postal Service operates in a commercial marketplace while also having a large contingent of captive customers given the Postal Service's market dominance over certain products and services. The law provides the Postal Service a statutory monopoly over mailboxes and the delivery of letters. The public interest role of a regulator in this case is clear: a need to protect the captive customers and ensure fair competition.

However, the Postal Service in 2020 is facing its most significant financial challenges of these past 50 years. It cannot generate sufficient funds to cover its mandated expenses while still investing in critically deferred capital needs. Given the Postal Service's severe and worsening financial situation — as was the case even before the impacts of the current COVID-19 pandemic crisis — we as a nation must respond. In a recently published op-ed, <https://morningconsult.com/opinions/ensuring-universal-postal-service-is-delivered-to-america/>, the Commission highlighted the Government

Accountability Office's (GAO) excellent evaluation of the fundamental postal public policy issues confronting our Nation in their report entitled [U.S. Postal Service: Congressional Action to Enable a Sustainable Business Model is Essential](#). The report's recommendations warrant immediate attention by Congress. Indeed, the GAO's first recommendation — "*Congress should consider reassessing and determining the level of universal postal service the nation requires*" — is long overdue and must be addressed. There are no easy answers, but answer, we must.

Today is an important milestone in the history of the Commission. The Commission in 2020 continues the important service to their fellow Americans that our predecessors began when President Nixon completed his signature to the Postal Reorganization Act on August 12, 1970. In my role as the 12th Chairman in the agency's history, it is a privilege to salute all of the current and previous Commissioners and staff on their stellar service to the Nation. Thank you.

The Postal Regulatory Commission is an independent federal agency that provides regulatory oversight over the U.S. Postal Service to ensure the transparency and accountability of the Postal Service and foster a vital and efficient universal mail system. The Commission is comprised of five Presidentially-appointed and Senate-confirmed Commissioners, each serving terms of six years. The Chairman is designated by the President. In addition to Chairman Robert G. Taub, the other commissioners are Vice Chairman Michael Kubayanda and Commissioners Mark Acton, Ann Fisher and Ashley Poling. Follow the PRC on Twitter: @PostalRegulator and LinkedIn.