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OAKLAND LOCAL APWU

American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

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December 2013

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Urgent Message to Local and State Presidents and National Officers

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Re: Postal Retail Units in Staples Stores

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I hope you have seen the recent *APWU News Bulletin* about the USPS deal with Staples, which is a direct assault on our jobs and the American people's right to *public* postal services. This issue is so important that I felt it was important to reach out to you directly as well.

On Nov. 10, in a deal that has clearly been in the works since at least last March, postal management announced it was launching a pilot program placing postal retail units in Staples stores throughout the country. Some of the initial sites opened quietly in October and others have opened in the last few weeks. Staples is the largest retailer of office supplies with almost 1,600 stores.

The APWU supports expanded postal services. **But the APWU is adamantly opposed to management plans to replace good-paying union jobs with non-union low-wage jobs held by workers who have no accountability for the safety and security of the mail.** Postal workers deserve better. Our customers deserve better.

On Nov. 20, in a meeting with Postmaster General Donahoe, I insisted that if this plan is to move forward, these postal units must be staffed by career postal employees. The APWU has requested extensive information about the financial arrangements and other specifics of this deal, and we have instructed our attorneys to explore legal avenues to challenge the program.

We also requested a meeting with the CEO of Staples to discuss our concerns.

While these efforts proceed we will begin preparations for protests at Staple stores throughout the country.

The APWU Executive Board discussed the issue on Nov. 22 and endorsed the plan to fight back.

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Postal management will undoubtedly try to convince our members that this arrangement is beneficial for APWU members because it creates revenue for the USPS. But revenue without good union jobs is not in the interest of our members. Postal Services that are performed by anyone other than well-trained postal workers will not serve the American people well.

Simply put, this is a huge step toward privatizing retail services. If we don't draw a line in the sand, mail processing and other operations will soon follow.

Only together can we stop these privatization plans. We will keep you informed of any progress at the national level, while at the same time we ask all of you to educate APWU members on the dangers of this new management program **and prepare them for action!**

In Union Solidarity,



Mark Dimondstein
President

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