

RULES, ELECTIONS, AND
INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation, rules, regulations or policies proposed to, or pending before, a local, state or federal governmental body or agency must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council with the concurrence of the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, the United States Postal Service (USPS) is the nation's oldest government service, dating back to 1775, providing crucial delivery services for correspondence, parcels, government, commercial and numerous other kinds of mailings; and

WHEREAS, in addition to handling and delivering tens of millions of pieces of mail on a daily basis, the USPS is a lifeline to the people residing in rural areas of the country, out of the reach of commercial parcel services and readily accessible internet connectivity; and

WHEREAS, even though various online communications media and telephones have contributed to a reduction in the volume of first class mail in recent years, polling has shown that the USPS has consistently enjoyed the support of more than 90% of the public; and

WHEREAS, over the past couple of decades various special interests and philosophically conservative policymakers have promoted the idea of privatizing the postal service, partly stemming from an underlying anti-government sentiment, and partially due to a belief that the USPS, which provides its very affordable service at a budgetary loss, should be run more like a commercial, for-profit business; and

WHEREAS, these sentiments ignore the fundamental reality that, over the course of nearly 250 years, the United States has long since determined which services can be conducted profitably by the private sector and which ones cannot, despite how vital they remain to the general public, with the USPS being a prime example of an unprofitable, but absolutely necessary service that would be severely disrupted by privatization; and

WHEREAS, in recent months the administration of President Trump has taken steps to make changes to the USPS that appear to do several undesirable things, appointing a new Postmaster General with no USPS experience but alleged financial interests in competing private shipping firms to undertake a series of program "reforms" which are demonstrably slowing down postal deliveries on a nationwide basis, inconveniencing millions of people, disrupting business and, relevant to the upcoming General Election, threatening to render vote-by-mail operations unreliable; and

WHEREAS, these changes include a hiring freeze, cancellation of overtime for employees, the attempted removal of hundreds of postal sorting machines and mail deposit boxes, an arbitrary downgrading of the handling service for election mail, and so on, with the USPS administration

notifying 46 states that it can't guarantee the timely handling of mail-in ballots unless they change their deadlines for postmarks and reception; and

WHEREAS, additionally, the USPS has been hobbled since 2006 by the Postal Accountability and Efficiency Act (PAEA), which has required the agency to establish and fund a \$72 million trust fund to cover pensions for 75 years; and

WHEREAS, it has been estimated that, if this requirement did not exist, the USPS would have operated at a profit since 2013, motivating members of Congress to propose H.R. 7015 to provide USPS with an infusion of up to \$25 billion to allow it to operate properly, and H.R. 2382 to repeal PAEA; and

WHEREAS, this legislation has been stalled by political disagreements, but the House of Representatives soon is expected to revisit these pieces of legislation and look at additional proposals to address both the funding and operational issues facing the USPS.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, with the concurrence of the Mayor, that by the adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby includes in its 2019-2020 federal Legislative Program support for H.R. 7015 and other actions which may be proposed to properly fund the United States Postal Service and halt and/or reverse all managerial and operational changes until Congress, the USPS Board of Governors and the Postal Regulatory Commission have been able to fully review and take action on such proposals; and

I FURTHER MOVE, that the City also hereby include support for H.R. 2382 in its 2019-2020 federal Legislative Program to relieve the USPS of the onerous obligation to be the only federal agency to be required to pre-fund a pension fund for 75 years.

PROPOSED BY: _____

PAUL KORETZ (verbal)
Councilmember, Fifth District

SECONDED BY _____

MONICA RODRIGUEZ (verbal)
Councilmember, 7th District