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ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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July 7, 2014

The Honorable Pete Sessions  
Chairman  
Committee on Rules  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-312, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On June 25, 2014, the Committee on Appropriations ordered reported the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2015 to the House. A specific proviso contained in the bill stating, "*Provided further*, That 6-day delivery and rural delivery of mail shall continue at not less than the 1983 level;" is within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

The six-day mail delivery proviso imposes a \$2 billion per year unfunded mandate on the United States Postal Service; this is a mandate it cannot afford. Last year, the Postal Service lost \$5 billion. The beleaguered agency has now defaulted on three separate multi-billion-dollar payments to the U.S. Treasury – statutorily required payments intended to fund its retiree health care obligations. These three payments amount to a combined \$15.7 billion, and the Postal Service will default on a fourth payment of \$5.7 billion on September 30, 2014. Today, the agency has more than \$113 billion in unfunded obligations and less than \$5 billion in total liquidity. Without meaningful reforms, such as the implementation of a modified six-day delivery schedule, all Postal Service operations are at risk, not just Saturday delivery.

On June 19, 2014, I wrote to Chairman Crenshaw thanking him for his decision not to include this authorizing provision in the base text of the Financial Services Appropriations bill. Unfortunately, the language was added via an amendment during full committee consideration of the legislation. Striking this proviso will have unified budget savings according to the Congressional Budget Office and could save the Postal Service \$2 billion annually, helping to avert a taxpayer-funded bailout of the Postal Service.

Additionally, Section 627 of the bill, a provision that would reauthorize the Multinational Species Conservation Fund Semipostal Stamp, is also within the jurisdiction of the Committee

The Honorable Pete Sessions  
July 7, 2014  
Page 2

on Oversight and Government Reform. This provision would violate a longstanding Oversight and Government Reform Committee Rule prohibiting the consideration of semipostal stamp legislation.

Both the six-day delivery provision and the stamp reauthorization provision violate House Rule XXI, clause 2, the prohibition on legislation in a general appropriation bill. If the Committee on Rules considers a special rule providing for the consideration of this bill, I respectfully request that these provisions not be protected from Rule XXI points of order.

Sincerely,



Darrell Issa  
Chairman

cc: The Honorable John A. Boehner, Speaker  
  
The Honorable Eric Cantor, Majority Leader  
  
The Honorable Kevin McCarthy, Majority Leader-Elect  
  
The Honorable Harold Rogers, Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
  
The Honorable Ander Crenshaw, Chairman  
Financial Service and General Government Subcommittee  
Committee on Appropriations  
  
The Honorable Paul Ryan, Chairman  
Committee on the Budget  
  
The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Minority Member