
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 63 Session of
2021

INTRODUCED BY DeLUCA, HILL-EVANS, SANCHEZ, D. WILLIAMS,
LONGIETTI, GALLOWAY, T. DAVIS, HARKINS, CIRESI, HOWARD, LEE,
NEILSON, FREEMAN AND O'MARA, FEBRUARY 26, 2021

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, FEBRUARY 26, 2021

A RESOLUTION

1 Commemorating the history and importance of the United States
2 Postal Service.

3 WHEREAS, The United States Postal Service (USPS) is a
4 critical pillar of the infrastructure and economy of the United
5 States; and

6 WHEREAS, The USPS provides an important service to residents
7 of the United States, including residents of Pennsylvania, by
8 ensuring the secure and timely delivery of mail; and

9 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania has long recognized the importance of a
10 postal service; and

11 WHEREAS, This recognition can be traced to the establishment
12 of Pennsylvania's first post office by William Penn in 1683; and

13 WHEREAS, Benjamin Franklin also had a major impact on the
14 development of the USPS; and

15 WHEREAS, Benjamin Franklin was appointed postmaster of
16 Philadelphia by the British Crown Post in 1737; and

17 WHEREAS, At that time, postmasters were often newspaper

1 publishers and restricted the free flow of information by
2 excluding rival newspapers from the mail; and

3 WHEREAS, Benjamin Franklin was, along with William Hunter of
4 Virginia, named joint postmaster general for the Crown on August
5 10, 1753; and

6 WHEREAS, As joint postmaster general, Franklin instituted
7 many improvements to the postal system; and

8 WHEREAS, Several of those improvements included establishing
9 a standardized postage rate chart based upon weight and
10 distance, facilitating the free flow of information by
11 instructing postmasters to admit all newspapers to the mail for
12 a small fee, encouraging postmasters to establish the penny
13 post, where letters not called for at the post office were
14 delivered for a penny, and instituting overnight postal travel
15 between New York and Philadelphia; and

16 WHEREAS, Colonial-era post offices in Pennsylvania and other
17 colonies laid the framework for American independence by
18 facilitating communication and information sharing; and

19 WHEREAS, In 1774, Benjamin Franklin was dismissed as joint
20 postmaster general by the Crown for being too sympathetic to the
21 American colonies; and

22 WHEREAS, At the end of Benjamin Franklin's tenure as joint
23 postmaster general, post roads operated from Florida to Maine
24 and into Canada; and

25 WHEREAS, On July 26, 1775, the Second Continental Congress
26 created the position of postmaster general and named Benjamin
27 Franklin to the post; and

28 WHEREAS, Postmaster General Franklin was in office when the
29 Declaration of Independence was signed and continued as
30 postmaster general until November 7, 1776; and

1 WHEREAS, The current USPS descends from the postal system
2 that Benjamin Franklin placed in operation; and

3 WHEREAS, The Articles of Confederation gave the United States
4 government the power to establish and regulate post offices; and

5 WHEREAS, These powers were preserved in Article I, Section 8,
6 Clause 7 of the Constitution of the United States, which gives
7 the Congress of the United States the power to establish post
8 offices and roads; and

9 WHEREAS, On February 20, 1792, President George Washington
10 signed into law the Postal Service Act, which established the
11 Post Office Department; and

12 WHEREAS, Early Federal laws concerning post offices
13 prioritized the security, privacy and timely delivery of mail
14 and furthered the freedom of the press by ensuring that
15 newspapers could be mailed at low postage rates; and

16 WHEREAS, The Postal Reorganization Act of 1970 transformed
17 the Post Office Department into the United States Postal
18 Service, and provided for many changes to the postal system; and

19 WHEREAS, The first section of the Postal Reorganization Act
20 states in part that, "The United States Postal Service shall be
21 operated as a basic and fundamental service provided to the
22 people by the Government of the United States, authorized by the
23 Constitution, created by act of Congress, and supported by the
24 people"; and

25 WHEREAS, The postal service has served and continues to serve
26 a critical role in the development of the United States,
27 providing for communication, commerce and information sharing
28 between people in distant parts of the United States; and

29 WHEREAS, This critical role and the importance of mail is
30 perhaps best exemplified by an inscription on the former

1 Washington, DC, Post Office, which reads:

2 Messenger of Sympathy and Love

3 Servant of Parted Friends

4 Consoler of the Lonely

5 Bond of the Scattered Family

6 Enlarger of the Common Life

7 Carrier of News and Knowledge

8 Instrument of Trade and Industry

9 Promoter of Mutual Acquaintance

10 Of Peace and of Goodwill

11 Among Men and Nations;

12 and

13 WHEREAS, During the COVID-19 pandemic, the delivery of mail

14 by the USPS has enabled individuals to receive essential

15 products, such as face masks and disinfectants, that are

16 necessary for COVID-19 mitigation; and

17 WHEREAS, The USPS has also enabled individuals to stay in

18 touch with loved ones during this crisis; and

19 WHEREAS, The secure and timely delivery of mail by the USPS

20 has enabled millions of voters to mail in their ballot and

21 participate in elections across the United States; and

22 WHEREAS, The finances of the USPS have been hamstrung by

23 various acts of the Congress of the United States; and

24 WHEREAS, The USPS does not receive tax revenue directly but

25 is instead expected to generate enough revenue to pay for

26 itself; and

27 WHEREAS, The USPS has not generated a profit since the Great

28 Recession began in 2007; and

29 WHEREAS, Shortfalls in USPS revenue may hamper the ability of

30 the USPS to deliver mail in under-served rural and urban

1 regions; therefore be it

2 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the
3 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania commemorate the history and
4 importance of the United States Postal Service; and be it
5 further

6 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the
7 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge the Congress of the United
8 States to provide the necessary funding for the USPS; and be it
9 further

10 RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to
11 each of the presiding officers of Congress, each member of the
12 Pennsylvania Congressional Delegation and each member of the
13 Postal Service Board of Governors.