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POSTAL SERVICE AND NATIONAL RURAL LETTERS CARRIERS' ASSOCIATION REACH TENTATIVE CONTRACT AGREEMENT

Negotiations continue with National Postal Mail Handlers Union

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Postal Service and the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association (NRLCA) have reached a tentative four-year contract agreement. Upon ratification by union members, the agreement will run through Nov. 20, 2010, and affect approximately 66,000 career employees and 52,000 non-career employees who deliver mail to residences and businesses on rural delivery routes.

"This tentative agreement serves not only the interests of the Postal Service and NRLCA members, but also our customers," said Doug Tulino, Postal Service Vice President for Labor Relations. "Working together, we will continue to meet our universal service obligation by providing affordable, high-quality mail service to everyone in America."

The Postal Service and NRLCA formally opened national contract negotiations on Aug. 25, 2006. This year was the first time new contracts were negotiated separately at the same time with all four of the Postal Service's largest unions.

Earlier this week, the Postal Service and the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) also agreed to a tentative four-year contract. Negotiations continue with the National Postal Mail Handlers Union (NPMHU). Negotiations with the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) were not successful and the two parties will now enter the dispute resolution process, which may include binding interest arbitration.

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Since 1775, the United States Postal Service and its predecessor, the Post Office Department, have connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. An independent federal agency that visits more than 146 million homes and businesses every day, the Postal Service is the only service provider delivering to every address in the nation. It receives no taxpayer dollars for routine operations, but derives its operating revenues solely from the sale of postage, products and services. With annual revenues of \$72 billion, it is the world's leading provider of mailing and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. The U.S. Postal Service delivers more than 46 percent of the world's mail volume—some 213 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year—and serves ten million customers each day at its 37,000 retail locations nationwide.

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