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## **Postmaster General Discusses ‘Vote By Mail’ at Conference** *Potter Provides Keynote Address at Secretaries of State Summer Meeting*

**Portland, OR** — Mail can play an important role in helping citizens choose their elected officials and the U.S. Postal Service has resources officials need to create Vote by Mail programs.

Those were the two main points shared by Postmaster General John E. Potter during a keynote address at the National the Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) summer meeting here. Stressing proven experience, commitment and available resources, Potter said the Postal Service is a ready partner in states’ efforts to reach voters and conduct elections through the mail.

“The Postal Service has a proud history of working with election officials across the country to suggest mailing options, assist with address databases and ensure proper handling of election materials,” Potter said, adding that almost 200,000 ballots were delivered to military installations around the world, including Iraq and Afghanistan, during the 2006 national elections.

“Even in times of war, we have delivered the most fundamental symbol of democracy. A ballot,” Potter said.

Founded in 1904, NASS is the nation’s oldest, nonpartisan, professional organization for state officials. The summer meeting, “A First-Class Experience,” is hosted by Bill Bradbury, Oregon’s Secretary of State. Oregon is the only state in the nation to vote exclusively by mail. Twenty six additional states are considering Vote By Mail initiatives.

The Postal Service plays no role in how elections are carried out in the United States, although it is fully authorized to inform and educate election officials about available USPS products and services.

Those services were put to the test last year when the Postal Service worked closely with the Louisiana Secretary of State and other officials to help locate and deliver election and voting information to tens of thousands of residents displaced by hurricanes Katrina and Rita in time for statewide elections as well as the New Orleans mayoral race.

The Louisiana legislature declared June 2, 2006, “United States Postal Service Day,” recognizing the dedication and commitment Postal Service employees showed after the hurricanes and specifically acknowledging successful efforts in the elections.

“We were honored by the recognition of the work we do every day in cities and towns across the country, but especially thankful for those two resolutions as they acknowledged the partnership we have with the state of Louisiana that we deeply valued,” Potter said.

The resources and expertise shared in Louisiana are available to any elected official across the country through training programs and an Internet-based resource center created by the Postal Service.

The Election Officials’ Mailing Resources website on [usps.com](http://usps.com) provides election officials with quick, easy and convenient access to postal resources, products, services and information designed specifically to address absentee ballot and vote by mail questions and challenges. State and local officials can find

information on the website on preparing and sending mail during an election cycle. It offers a step-by-step course of action that includes planning, addressing and designing election mail.

The Postal Service also created 90-minute, customized training sessions for election officials. "Election Mail: tips, Tools and Tactics for Successful Mailing" is presented by postal representatives with a depth of knowledge and understanding of election mail and designed to address specific needs, challenges and laws specific to individual cities and counties across the country. To date, more than 1,500 officials have completed the training.

"The Postal Service recognizes the vital role that mail plays in the American democratic process. We are committed to providing election officials with the information necessary to meet their election mail needs," Potter said. "We have always been proud of our role in binding a great nation together and we are pleased that we can strength this role by our participation in voting by mail."

**Please Note:** For more information about Election Mail and the Postal Service, go to [usps.com/electionmail](https://usps.com/electionmail).

Broadcast quality video and audio, photo stills and other media resources can be found in the USPS Newsroom at [www.usps.com/news](https://www.usps.com/news).

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An independent federal agency, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that visits every address in the nation, 146 million homes and businesses, six days a week. It has 37,000 retail locations and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to pay for operating expenses, not tax dollars. The Postal Service has annual revenues of \$73 billion and delivers nearly half the world's mail.