The Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs committee is scheduled to markup Senator Carper's bill, S. 1507, July 29 at 10 a.m. As of the deadline for filing amendments, the following 11 amendments have been offered.

Senator Coburn:

Coburn # 1 - Would require any binding arbitration in the negotiation of postal contracts to take the financial health of the Postal Service into account.

Coburn #2 - Would repeal the requirement in appropriations law that the Postal Service deliver mail six days a week.

Coburn #3 - Would prohibit the Postal Service from issuing bonuses in any year that it reports a year-end net loss.

Senator Collins:

Collins #1 - Would adjust the payment schedule in the underlying bill to even out the payments over the ten year period. According to GAO, this change in the payment schedule would yield only a half a billion dollar increase to the unfunded liability at the end of fiscal year 2019, as opposed to a $4 billion increased that would be provided in the underlying bill. Additionally, this amendment would require an arbitrator to consider USPS's financial condition in rendering its decision about collective bargaining agreements.

Collins #2 - Would require GAO to expedite the reporting requirements for its study of USPS's options and strategies for the long-term structural and operational USPS reforms. The Postal Enhancement and Accountability Act of 2006 requires that GAO conduct this study by 2011. This amendment would require that the study be complete by March 31, 2010, so that USPS can benefit from this study sooner.

Collins #3 - Would limit USPS's total outstanding debt to $15 billion, as required under current law. The underlying bill would allow USPS to borrow an additional $2 billion in fiscal years 2009 and 2010 (increases annual borrowing from $3 billion to $5 billion), but exempts the $2 billion from being applied to USPS's total debt ceiling of $15 billion. This amendment would require that any additional amount of the additional $2 billion USPS borrows apply to the $15 billion debt ceiling.

Collins #4 - Would provide USPS with three years of relief, similar to the H.R. 22 in the House, by allowing USPS to pay its current retiree health care premiums out of the Retiree Health Benefits Fund instead of out of its operating costs, for fiscal years 2009, 2010, and 2011. The amendment would also include the provision in amendment 2, above, which expedites GAO's reporting requirement to March 31, 2010.

Senator McCain:

McCain #1: Removes the temporary increase to postal service borrowing limitations.

McCain #2: Removes the temporary increase to postal service borrowing limitations, and reduces the annual borrowing capacity of the postal service from Treasury to $2,000,000,000 in 2010 and to $1,000,000,000 in 2011 and nothing thereafter.

McCain #3: Removes the temporary increase to postal service borrowing limitations, and suspends the borrowing capability of the postal service once the $15 billion debt ceiling is reached until all outstanding debt is paid back.

McCain #4: Upon expiration of each of the existing collective bargaining agreements between the postal service and its employees, the portion of health benefit premium that the postal service will pay for its employees shall be no greater than the portion paid for by the federal government for its employees under the FEHB plan.