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Contact: Jamie Horwitz
(202)549-4921(cell)
jhdcp@starpower.net
Sally Davidow
(202) 842-4250
sdavidow@apwu.org

Postal Workers to Protest Outside Local Staples Store on Tues. – Pittsburgh is 1 of 4 Test Markets for Moving Mail from Post Offices to Staples Stores

Pressure Mounts on Struggling Company to Abandon Operating Postal Counters as “Don’t Buy” from Staples Campaign Wins Endorsement from Teachers, AFL-CIO

PITTSBURGH – A nationwide campaign against a no-bid, sweetheart deal between the U.S. Postal Service and Staples will come to Pittsburgh on Tuesday, June 17.

Members of the American Postal Workers Union will protest at the Staples store on McKnight Road against a deal that is outsourcing USPS work to Staples stores. The arrangement privatizes USPS retail services, lowering standards and eroding good, living-wage jobs. The Pittsburgh area, along with Central Massachusetts, the Bay Area (San Francisco) and Atlanta are test markets for the program.

Who: Members of the American Postal Workers Union
What: Protest at Pittsburgh Staples store against outsourcing and privatization of the U.S. Postal Service
When: Tuesday, June 17, 12 noon to 2 p.m.
Where: 4801 McKnight Road, Pittsburgh

In October, the USPS announced a no-bid, sweetheart deal to open postal counters in 82 Staples stores – staffed by Staples’ low-wage, high-turnover employees, who have no experience and virtually no training in handling letters or packages,.

The U.S. Postal Service plans to expand this “pilot” project to Staples’ 1,500 stores nationwide.

In San Francisco, one of the test markets, the hours of service have already been reduced in more than 20 U.S. Post Offices.

“This is a plan to close neighborhood Post Offices and outsource postal work,” said APWU President Mark Dimondstein. “After driving customers away by reducing hours, postal management will conduct a study of traffic in Post Offices and find that it’s gone down. Then they’ll claim to have the evidence they need to justify closing Post Offices,” he said.

The upcoming Pittsburgh demonstration is the latest in a series of protests against the secretive, sweetheart deal. Since January, 90 protests have been staged outside Staples stores in California alone. In April, members of APWU, along with labor and community allies, staged protests at Staples stores in 56 cities across the United States.

A growing number of organizations have endorsed a boycott of Staples, urging their members to take their business elsewhere. Endorsers include the national AFL-CIO, the California Federation of Teachers, American Federation of Teachers-Michigan and American Federation of Teachers-New Hampshire. Almost one-third of Staples revenue, according to some estimates, comes from school supplies.

“Our momentum is building, because people understand the threat to public postal services and living-wage jobs posed by the Staples deal once they are made aware of the situation,” said Dimondstein. “The U.S. mail is not for sale.”

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The American Postal Workers Union represents 200,000 employees of the United States Postal Service, and is affiliated with the AFL-CIO.