

Letter: Postal Service privatization would not serve public well

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It's disappointing that Post-Dispatch columnist David Nicklaus again climbs aboard the rickety U.S. Postal Service privatization bandwagon, "**The Postal Service needs a bailout. After that, it needs reform**" (Aug. 20). Why does he take his guidance about the Postal Service from the Cato Institute? Could he not find a more objective source than a corporate-funded, right-wing think tank, with their irrational privatize all public services propaganda?

If private companies could do the job better, more efficiently and at less cost, they would have done so long before now. Compare the private companies' rates against the Postal Service. If the open market always leads to the best outcome, how come these private companies can't deliver for less than the Postal Service? And no, the Postal Service rates are not subsidized.

Yes, the decline in letter mail volume has adversely affected revenues. But many efforts to reduce costs have met with congressional roadblocks. What has decimated the Postal Service's finances is a law passed in 2006 that required them to prepay retirement health benefits for the next 75 years in advance, costing over \$5 billion a year. And yet, the Postal Service is prevented from setting its own rates. What private company could operate under such onerous restrictions and be profitable?

The solution is to change the laws that govern the Postal Service so it can remain a viable and treasured public institution. Privatization is just a knee-jerk, right-wing canard that is ill thought out and will serve the public poorly.

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