



Pitney Bowes pays lawmakers to push privatizing Post Office

by: [BILL BRICKLEY](#) January 14 2013

Pitney Bowes seems to be promoting a reckless and astoundingly flawed plan to privatize every part of the Postal Service except mail delivery. This reckless plan was brought up years ago by the Libertarian Cato Institute but was quickly dismissed. Yet the idea has been reintroduced recently. Why would this plan be suddenly creating interest in DC at this time? It's simple: follow the money.

Under this plan, financed by Pitney Bowes, the entire Postal Service would become a series of private companies that would process and transport the mail to your US Postal Service Letter Carrier who would deliver it. The rationale of this misguided plan is that they can eliminate hundreds of thousands of good union middle-class jobs and replace them with low wage and benefit challenged employees. Then disguise it by still having your trusted Letter Carrier bring it to your door.

This Postal Service is easily the most trusted Government Agency in America. So Pitney Bowes and its extremist colleagues in DC figure they can't privatize the entire Postal Service, as Mitt Romney wanted to do, instead they will keep the public face of our nation's most trusted agency and have employees paid at the Walmart level process the mail. Corporate America daily underestimates the intelligence of the American people but this seems to be extreme even by their standards.

How can people feel secure placing their most important documents into a mail system run by a shadowy workforce? The Postal Service goes to extremes in keeping people's mail private, safe and secure. Undoubtedly this new private mail processing company would not do the same.

Pitney Bowes has contributed the maximum \$17,500 campaign contribution to one congressional candidate in its history. To no surprise the recipient was Congressman Darryl Issa, R-Calif., in 2012. Also keep in mind Issa also received \$17,500 from UPS.

Mr. Issa whose extremist views on dismantling the Postal Service are well known. His Government Oversight Committee has blocked any postal reform legislation other than his own HR 2309. Another major recipient of thousands of dollars from Pitney Bowes is Dennis Ross, R-Calif., who was the only co-sponsor of the union busting HR 2309. Interestingly, Ross' 2nd biggest campaign contributor is UPS with \$15,000 in 2012. This picture seems clear that these people want the Postal Service eliminated for their own gain and anti-union agenda.

Advocates for this Pitney Bowes study stress that private companies "can fulfill other tasks in the postal network and do so at a lower cost and with greater efficiency and innovation and without political and regulatory interference."

Lets look at the facts: The Postal Service has the least expensive rates in the industrial world and their protection of the mail is unrivaled. The Postal Service has not been able to invest more in innovation because it is saddled with a 2006 congressional mandate that the Postal Service make annual \$5.5 billion payments into a retirement benefits fund for future employees who are not even born yet. No agency or business, public or private is required to make such a payment.

Why not simply let the Postal Service survive without any " political and regulatory interference"? I am sure no replacement private company is going to fund retiree costs 75 years into the future like the USPS is required by Congress to do. Most likely this replacement company will offer no retiree benefits whatsoever.

So Pitney Bowes is funding this " study" that is the going to be officially released in full in a few months. Its release will coincide with the debt ceiling negotiations. What better time to attempt to sneak this ridiculous plan into law. Only in the world of extremist politics and right-wing think tanks would an idea like this seem credible. Pitney Bowes should save their money as their CEO who made \$9,230,798 last year is retiring soon and will undoubtedly need a golden parachute on his way out the door.