

Madam Speaker, I came to Congress as somebody predisposed to support our Postal Service. I believe we have some of the finest men and women in the world delivering the mail, playing an important part in communities in many small and important ways. But the leadership and management of the Postal Service is fumbling one opportunity after another.

One example is their years of insensitivity to relocation issues. Because of the tremendous concern expressed by people in communities across the country, I have introduced legislation to prevent the Postal Service managers from unilaterally abandoning historical buildings and moving to strip malls at the edge of town; that they must obey local land use planning and building codes and give local citizens as much say in how the post office relates to their community as which Elvis stamp we are going to have.

If I ever needed additional evidence that the management of the Postal Service is out of touch with America, the evidence was delivered to my office last week. The Postal Service notified me that it is going to get tough with the Portland Marathon, the largest volunteer marathon in America, which raised over \$600,000 last year to benefit the special Olympics, schools, service groups, the Leukemia Society, and many other charities.

By letter, the Postal Service said that it has decided, despite a perfect record on the part of the Portland Marathon, no prior violations or complaints, despite an illegal search of the Marathon files by its postal inspectors; despite the preapproval of all the Marathon's mailings by representatives of the Postal Service, that the Portland Marathon, this group of dedicated volunteers, must pay a \$5,000 fine or face Federal trial.

What terrible scheme inspired the Postal Service to clamp down on the Marathon? What scheme so horrible that the Postal Service will pursue a case while paying many times the cost it will ever recover from the Marathon if it wins? What terrible scheme requires the Postal Service to bring down its full force on this dedicated volunteer organization without so much as a warning, with no exceptions or adjustments?

The Portland Marathon offered T-shirts and other memorabilia to some runners without indicating an identification statement in some of its mailings.

Somehow the U.S. Postal Service seems to have adopted the attitude that in its new status as a quasipublic agency, it is free to be dumb, rigid, and engage in behavior which wastes the resources of a dedicated group of volunteers.

Postal Service vs. the Portland Marathon

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In the words of the fabled gentleman from Ohio (Mr. Traficant), `Beam me up, Madam Speaker.'