



House to Move Amended H.R. 22 To Floor For Final Passage

As the window to provide relief to the Postal Service starts to close, the House Government Reform Committee has decided to act and will amend H.R. 22 on the floor for the House next week, and (hopefully) pass it. The bill, as it will be amended, will provide the Postal Service with one year's relief. As amended, the bill should have no score, which is to say that its score will be zero.

While not perfect, given the multiple billion dollar "score" that CBO gave the bill and stubbornly refused to change, the one year bill may be all we can realistically get right now. *Thus, the League is urging all its members to call their Congressmen and urge immediate passage of H.R. 22 as it will be amended on the floor by the Chairman of the Government Reform Committee.*

Since the score was the chief roadblock to passage of H.R. 22, the League is hopeful that the bill will pass the House next week.

H.R. 22 was specifically designed not to use any taxpayer dollars, but rather to provide recession relief to the Postal Service through refinancing its obligation to prefund its retiree health benefit obligation. The Congressional Budget Office, however, ended up scoring the bill at multiple billions of dollars even though it will cost the government and the taxpayer absolutely nothing. CBO did so using a rare and "unusual" behavioral approach to scoring, that concluded that if the Postal Service got the relief from H.R. 22, it would refrain from making several billion dollars worth of cuts that it would otherwise make, thus creating a "score" of several billion dollars.

Passing a bill that provides one year of FY 2009 relief in the final weeks of the Postal Service's FY 2009 fiscal year would provide the Postal Service relief so late in the year that it could not refrain from making the cuts that it otherwise would have made. Thus the score should be zero, under CBO's logic.

If nothing is done by the end of September, the Postal Service must pay the full \$5.4 billion for pre-funding its retiree health benefits. The League is optimistic that that will not happen, and that relief will be provided before the end of the month.