

EDITORIALS COLUMNS LETTERS

The Pulpits of Your Publication

Presented by:

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What is an Editorial?

Editorials effectively communicate an opinion or position on an issue.

Opinion supported by Fact.

Editorial Components:

- Introduction, Body, and Conclusion
- Objective Explanation
- Relevant/Timely Subject
- Diffuse Opposition
- Solutions
- Concise Conclusion

Editorial Writing Tips:

- Use facts and statistics
- Keep to the topic
- Acknowledge opposition (without dwelling)
- Write persuasively

Types of Editorials

Explain or Interpret

The explanation/interpretation editorial will outline why the news outlet covered a sensitive or controversial subject.

Types of Editorials

Criticize

Constructively criticize actions, decision, or situations while providing alternate solutions.

Often used to point out the problem or a flawed argument.

Types of Editorials

Persuade

These editorials highlight the solution more than the problem. From the first paragraph, readers are encouraged to take a specific, positive action.

Political/issue endorsements are good examples of persuasion.

Types of Editorials

Praise

Commend people/organizations for something done well.

Not used very often. Or are used in combination with criticism/persuasion editorial types.

Letters to the Editor

Editorialesque

- Utilize editorial elements (Intro/Body/Conclusion)
- Shorter in length
- Concise
- Supporting facts
- Timely/relevant
- Support or opposition

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

Encourage companies to create good jobs

This is in response to "The minimum wage mirage" (Editorial, Nov. 15). A person working 40 hours per week for 52 weeks at the federal minimum wage of \$5.15 per hour earns an annual gross salary of \$10,712—less than \$900 per month. Even with the higher Illinois minimum wage of \$6.50 per hour, the annual gross salary is \$13,520 per year, which is still \$3,080 less than the federal poverty level for a family of three. Many minimum-wage earners actually work fewer than 40 hours per week, so their income is even further reduced.

It is appalling that the Tribune is once again using the argument that any job is better than no job at all, as it did during the "big-box" living wage battle.

I challenge the editors and

reporters at the Chicago Tribune to do their jobs for minimum wage with no benefits and see how well they can provide for their families.

Increasing the minimum wage is a popular idea among voters because part of the American dream encompasses the notion of "an honest day worked equals an honest day's pay."

Government is stepping in on behalf of working families because the companies refuse to do the right thing. The corporate trend is to pass along the costs of doing business to taxpayers.

Your editorial only perpetuates why more and more taxpayers support government-mandated wages and benefits.

Taxpayers are tired of paying for the operating expenses

of large, profitable corporations. Your suggestion that taxpayers shoulder the burden for a company to do business is offensive.

If a company wants to operate, then it needs to figure out how to run the business plus ensure that its employees are provided with decent wages, affordable, comprehensive health care and at least retirement benefits to supplement Social Security.

It shouldn't be left up to taxpayers to pay twice: first as a consumer of goods and services and then again through higher taxes.

The focus should be on how to encourage companies to create good jobs instead of enabling corporate America to exploit workers and taxpayers.

*Elizabeth Drea
Justice.*

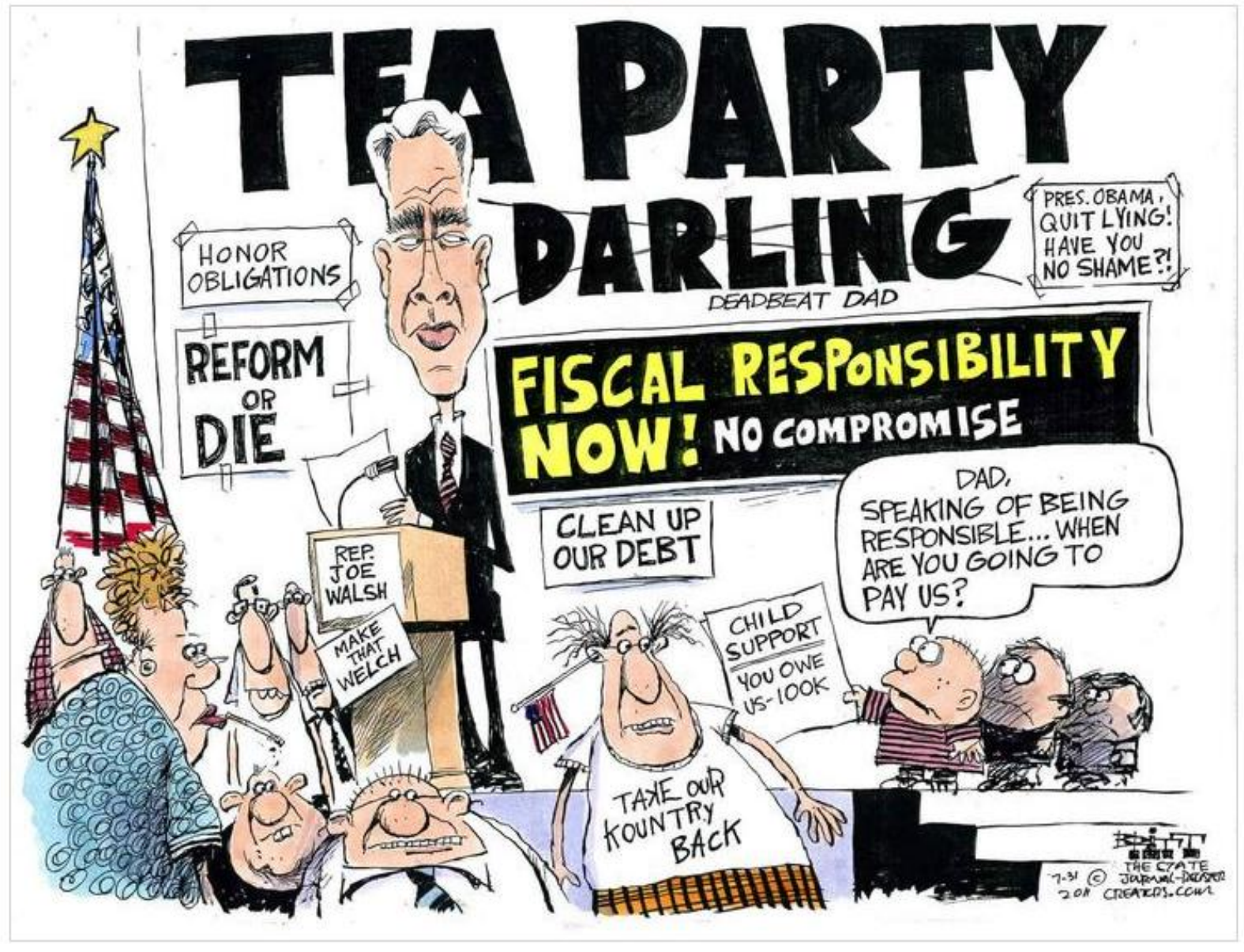
Op-Eds

Opinion Editorials (submissions)

- Utilize editorial elements (Intro/Body/Conclusion)
- Longer in length (than letter to editor)
- Supporting facts
- Timely/relevant
- Support or opposition
- Generally submitted by authority on issue

Editorial Cartoons

- Visual Commentaries



Britt: Quinn nixes pay raises for unionized state workers



Britt: How the Supreme Court greets female Walmart employees

Walmart GREETERS



Other Editorial Outlets

- Editorial Boards
- Blogs (blog writer or blog commenter)
- Comment boards
- Social Media
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - YouTube

Editorial Exercise

Editorial to Membership (or potential members)

- Why should they join the union?
- Why they should support political action committee
- Or another issue you want to make a point on.

Letter to the Editor Exercise

The Washington Post

Postal Reform Act is imperfect, but needed

By Editorial, Published: July 28

THE BIGGEST CRISIS surrounding the U.S. Postal Service is the fact that no one seems to notice how bad the crisis is.

APWU to Washington Post: Destroying Unions Won't Fix USPS

APWU Web News Article 084-2011, Aug. 2, 2011

APWU President Cliff Guffey has a simple message for the *Washington Post*: Destroying unions and attacking workers' rights won't solve the Postal Service's financial problems.

In a letter to the editor published Aug. 1, the union president disputed a July 28 *Washington Post* editorial that endorsed H.R. 2309 — a bill introduced by Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA) and Rep. Dennis Ross (R-FL) that would mandate massive service cuts and give an unelected “solvency authority” the right to unilaterally renegotiate labor contracts.

The editorial “endorsed the strategy that is being employed by Republican governors who use budget deficits to attack collective-bargaining rights while ignoring other methods of closing budget gaps,” Guffey wrote.

***APWU to Washington Post:* Destroying Unions Won't Fix USPS**

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a fact the *Washington Post* dismissed as a “cache that has given those unwilling to change the status quo an argument for postponing structural reforms.”

“Apparently, those ‘unwilling to change the status quo’ include the postmaster general, the Postal Regulatory Commission, the USPS Office of the Inspector General, the Congressional Research Service, and Democratic and Republican members of Congress, all of whom have said the Office of Personnel Management should be able to credit the service’s pension overpayments to the health benefits’ liability,” he said.

“The policy that the editorial promoted, including ‘renegotiating collective bargaining agreements,’ puts the *Post* squarely in the camp

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“Nearly every analysis of the Postal Service recognizes that the cause of its financial ‘crisis’ is a misguided 2006 congressional mandate requiring the service to pre-fund 75 years’ worth of retiree health benefits over 10 years,” he said, noting that no other government agency or private business is required to make such payments.

“The editorial said the mandate is a hedge against a future bailout, but it is the pre-funding requirement that has driven the Postal Service to insolvency,” Guffey continued. “Without it, the service would have had a surplus of \$611 million over the past four years. Congress created this mess, and Congress can fix it.”

Guffey also noted that many independent reports have shown that the USPS has overfunded its two pension accounts by billions of dollars —

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of Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker (R) and the Tea Party,” Guffey concluded.

The *Washington Post* has published at least seven editorials about the USPS over the last two years, and has taken an anti-labor stance in each one — either criticizing USPS labor contracts as too generous; attacking the no layoff clause or the level of health care and retirement benefits employees receive, or claiming that the collective bargaining system is tilted toward unions. Endorsing legislation that would allow a commission to void labor contracts is only the latest example of the *Post*’s hostility toward workers and unions.

Tea Party Building Support for Issa Bill

APWU Web News Article 085-2011, Aug. 4, 2011

“Tea Party” groups are building public and congressional support for H.R. 2309, legislation sponsored in the U.S. House of Representative by Reps. Darrell Issa (R-CA) and Dennis Ross (R-FL) that APWU President Cliff Guffey has called “a reckless assault on postal workers and the Postal Service.”

One group, The Tea Party.net, claims to have generated more than 100,000 letters and email messages to lawmakers demanding passage of Issa’s bill. The group’s Web site provides scant information about the reasons for USPS financial problems or how the Ross-Issa bill would address them. Instead, it provides a link to a House Web page controlled by Issa that claims postal workers are overpaid and that the legislation would forestall a taxpayer “bailout” of the USPS.

Another conservative activist group, Citizens Against Government Waste, is also blaming “unmanageable labor costs” as well as “excess infrastructure” for USPS deficits.

Tea Party Building Support for Issa Bill

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The organization has put members of Congress on notice that votes on H.R. 2309 “will be among those considered in CCAGW’s 2011 Congressional Ratings,” a legislative scorecard used to determine which members of Congress the organization deems worthy of re-election.

Neither group, however, informs visitors about the principal reason for USPS deficits: a congressional mandate imposed by Congress in the 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA) that requires the USPS to “pre-fund” healthcare benefits for future retirees at a cost of more than \$5 billion per year for 10 years. This is a burden no other business or government agency is forced to bear. (The PAEA also prevents the Postal Service from raising postage costs to pay for this mandate.) Absent the pre-funding requirement, the Postal Service would have experienced a cumulative surplus of \$611 million over the last four years, despite the worst recession in many decades.

Tea Party Building Support for Issa Bill

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Nor do they mention that the federal government is holding billions of dollars of excess postal payments to FERS and CSRS. (The USPS has a surplus of \$6.9 billion in its Federal Employee Retirement System account, and, according to two independent actuarial studies, has overpaid the Civil Service Retirement System account by \$50 billion to \$75 billion.)

Making Workers Pay

“The Ross-Issa bill would do nothing to correct USPS overpayments to its pension accounts or loosen the financial chokehold cause by the prefunding requirement,” Guffey said.

Instead, it holds USPS workers accountable for USPS financial problems.

H.R. 2309 would create a “solvency authority” with the power to unilaterally modify collective bargaining agreements any time the USPS defaults on “any obligation to the federal government for more than 30

Tea Party Building Support for Issa Bill

APWU Web News Article 085-2011, Aug. 4, 2011

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days. “The solvency board would be empowered to cut wages, abolish benefits, and end our protection against layoffs,” the union president said.

In addition, he noted, the bill would increase employees’ costs for healthcare coverage and life insurance, and effectively eliminate the right to bargain over these benefits.

The Issa-Ross bill also would harm citizens and businesses by forcing up to \$2 billion in postal office and facility closures.

A Far Better Bill

Meanwhile, postal unions and the postal business community are urging legislators to support H.R. 1351, a bill introduced by Rep. Steve Lynch (D-MA) that would allow the USPS to use the pension account overpayments to meet the retiree healthcare prefunding demand.

Tea Party Building Support for Issa Bill

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“It is a disservice to America that these groups are mobilizing their members to support H.R. 2309 without giving them a full account of the facts about the USPS financial crisis,” said APWU Legislative and Political Director Myke Reid.

“With misguided zeal, they are supporting legislation that would undermine a vital public service – the world’s largest, most trusted, most efficient, and least expensive postal system. We must ensure they don’t succeed.”

APWU Vows to Fight to Keep Offices Open

APWU Web News Article 082-2011, July 28, 2011

“The American Postal Workers Union will stand with our neighbors to demand that post offices, stations, and branches remain open — and expand the services they offer — wherever they are needed,” APWU President Cliff Guffey said. The USPS announced July 26 that it plans to study 3,700 post offices, stations and branches for possible closure.

“Closing post offices and slashing service to the American people is not the answer to the Postal Service’s financial crisis,” Guffey said. “The USPS is well aware of the cause of its financial difficulties,” he added. “They cannot cut their way to fiscal health.”

“Congress created the crisis when it slapped the USPS with a \$5.5 billion obligation that no other government agency or private company is forced to bear,” he said, referring to the requirement that the USPS pre-fund a 75-year retiree healthcare liability over a 10-year period.

“And Congress has refused — so far — to allow the USPS to apply billions of dollars in overpayments to its pension funds to the pre-funding requirement.”

APWU Vows to Fight to Keep Offices Open

APWU Web News Article 082-2011, July 28, 2011

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“The federal government is forcing the Postal Service into bankruptcy by holding billions of dollars of USPS money,” Guffey added.

“Unfortunately, the USPS response is misguided. Closing post offices, stations, and branches will not save the Postal Service.”

The USPS plans to replace some of the offices with “Village Post Offices” – convenience stores that will sell stamps and flat-rate packaging – misses the mark, he said.

“In most cases, Village Post Offices will not be able to provide the American people with the service they expect and deserve,” Guffey said. “The so-called ‘Village Post Offices’ are just a warm and fuzzy name for privatizing the USPS.

Union Files Unfair Labor Practice Charge Over USPS Refusal to Provide Information on Consolidations

APWU Web News Article 086-2011, Aug. 4, 2011

The APWU has filed an unfair labor practice charge with the National Labor Relations Board (NRLB) protesting the Postal Service's refusal to provide the union with information regarding Area Mail Processing (AMP) feasibility studies. The union contends that management's failure to provide the information constitutes a breach of its obligation to bargain in good faith.

On May 10, 2011, the APWU wrote to the Postal Service requesting information about AMP feasibility studies. "Before undertaking a consolidation study, the USPS must consider the impact consolidation would have on the community, service standard changes, impact on customer service, impact on operations at gaining and losing facilities, equipment deployment, and the likelihood of potential savings and efficiencies," wrote Executive Vice President Greg Bell in the union's

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APWU Web News Article 086-2011, Aug. 4, 2011

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request for information. The union also requested a copy of available AMP feasibility studies prior to public input meetings and before a final decision is made. The union currently receives redacted copies of the AMP studies after the USPS makes its decision.

In a June 20 letter the USPS denied the union's request in its entirety. The data requested by the APWU was not relevant to bargaining, management asserted, and providing the information would slow the decision-making process.

The Postal Service also refused to provide un-redacted copies of AMP studies and Post Implementation Reviews ("PIR") after decisions have been made and facilities have been relocated.

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APWU Web News Article 086-2011, Aug. 4, 2011

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The Postal Service maintained the information would aid competitors and rejected the idea of a confidentiality agreement, claiming such an agreement would be ineffective.

The union's unfair labor practice charge asserted that the information is relevant to enforcing the Collective Bargaining Agreement and to providing input to the Postal Service about decisions that would directly affect bargaining unit employees.

Many APWU locals have expressed frustration with management's refusal to provide the information, and their concerns have been echoed by community residents and local businesses.

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They ask, “How can we provide meaningful input, without access to information about the effect on the community, changes in service standards, and the impact on customer service?”

The Postal Service also has refused to provide un-redacted information to members of the House of Representatives and Senate whose constituents are affected by consolidations. At a time when the Postal Service is seeking support from members of Congress on major issues, it makes little sense to deny their requests for information concerning consolidation of postal operations in their area, Bell commented.

No Matter What...

ALWAYS

be clear and concise
in your writing!

THANK YOU

