

Postal Regulatory Commission

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PRC Chairman Addresses Japanese Leaders on U.S. Postal Reform

Washington, DC – United States Postal Regulatory Commission Chairman Dan G. Blair outlined the history and direction of postal reform in the United States at a symposium held yesterday at the Tokyo American Center, in Tokyo, Japan, entitled, "New Regulatory and Business Models for Postal Delivery and Express Services," for Japanese leaders representing government, the postal regulatory community, the private sector, the media, and academia.

"Every national postal system has a unique history, and this history plays a critical role in how each nation pursues reform," Blair said. He noted that the U.S. postal system was created by the founders of the United States to unite the country, promote economic growth, and stimulate the social and civic development of the people.

"In 2006, the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act created a modern framework that allows the U.S. Postal Service to compete and earn profits while preserving an affordable, quality universal postal service," Blair said, citing a number of modern practices incorporated into the law that:

- Created a strong regulator, the Postal Regulatory Commission, to balance the new flexibilities given to the Postal Service, protect the public interest and ensure fair competition in competitive markets;
- Placed postal monopoly products, such as letters, publications, and advertising, under an inflation-based price cap to prevent abuse of monopoly pricing powers, while allowing for fast, predictable price changes;
- Established regulations for competitive products - like Express Mail and commercial package services - to allow the Postal Service to compete with private-sector companies on a more level playing field; and,
- Directed the Postal Regulatory Commission to oversee the creation of reports, systems, and procedures to measure and foster service improvements and to ensure the transparency and accountability of Postal Service finances and operating performance.

Blair emphasized the importance of oversight in providing accurate, up-to-date data for U.S. decision makers. The Postal Regulatory Commission provides a window of transparency into the Postal Service's financial and operational health.

While in Tokyo, Blair also is meeting with the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan and Japanese government officials responsible for postal regulatory issues.

- 30 -

The Postal Regulatory Commission is an independent federal agency comprised of five Presidentially-appointed and Senate-confirmed Commissioners, each serving terms of six years. The Chairman is designated by the President. In addition to Chairman Blair, the other Commissioners are Vice Chairman Nanci Langley, Ruth Goldway, Tony Hammond, and Mark Acton.