

POSTAL NEWS

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1. Health care reform deserves serious debate

Earlier this week, the U.S. House of Representatives passed what it called health care reform legislation.

This region's own representative there, Republican Virginia Foxx, was absent when it came to constructive debate and work on the issue. Her only contribution to the discussion was to make the wild claim that health care legislation is a bigger threat to America than any terrorist, and her even more wildly inaccurate claim that every American has access to health care.

The first comment, of course, was inflammatory rhetoric. The second, we believe, shows just how out of touch she is with the typical American who either can't get health care because he or she can't pay the high cost of medical care, or they are paying out 15 to 20 percent of their annual income for health insurance.

Now the debate moves to the Senate, and we hope North Carolina's two representatives there will give the concept more serious consideration. Sen. Kay Hagan, a Democrat, has been a bit coy on the subject, but we suspect ultimately she will support whatever Democratic proposal comes to the floor.

Just as we see fault with Foxx's stand of flat-out opposition to anything pushed by the Democratic party, we find it equally irresponsible for a representative to jump on the bandwagon of legislation simply because her party originated the bill.

That leaves Sen. Richard Burr. His recent comments shed some insightful light on the debate, mostly devoid of rhetoric and blind opposition.

Burr said earlier this week the House version of health care reform is really an expansion of medical insurance coverage without true reform in the health care industry, and that the bill does little to rein in the rising cost of health care.

Unfortunately, Burr also said he believes the concept of a public option is dead, because it creates a government-run entity that will bring to an end the private insurance marketplace.

We beg to differ on that point, and we would hold up to the package and delivery industry as an example of how private industry finds a way to compete with

governmental or quasi-government monopolies. Federal Express, UPS, and other similar businesses have done quite well in competing with the U.S. Postal system, despite a playing field badly tilted in favor of the postal system. We suspect the private insurance industry, which has been quite imaginative in finding ways to reap great profit from its customer base, will figure out a way to stay in business even if a public option is on the table.

Still, it is good to see Burr taking a big-picture look at the issue, peeling away the inaccuracies and partisan arguments and attempting to look at the core issues of making health care affordable and available to most Americans.

We wish Foxx had done the same, and we hope Hagan will take Burr's approach to this landmark debate.

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2. Kenya to host UN's global meeting on postal reform in 2010

News - Africa news .Kenya has secured the greenlight to host an international meeting of postal service providers to strategise on new measures of ensuring the survival of the postal industry, officials said here on Friday.

Kenya's Information Minister Samuel Poghiso said the government signed an agreement with the Geneva-based Universal Postal Union (UPU), a UN body, to host UPU's Strategy Conference, slated for 22-23 September, 2010.

According to the Information Ministry, an agreement, authorising Kenya to convene the meeting at the UN Complex in Nairobi in 2010, was signed in Berne, Switzerland, on Wednesday, between the Kenyan Minister and the UPU's Director-General Edouard Deyan.

The Kenyan Minister, who chaired UPU's Council of Administration meeting, to discuss the organisation's operational issues, said the Strategy meeting due to be held in Nairobi, comes at a time of need for the postal sector, which is facing a radically transformed market.

The survival of the postal industry is facing a major challenge, mainly as a result of the introduction of internet and other Information Technology-enhanced services.

"The post is undergoing tremendous transformation in response to new challenges brought about by the changing market environment and technology," the minister said.

Some 191 UN states are expected at the global Postal meeting which is expected to attract some 800 delegates.

Nairobi - 13/11/2009

3. Private postal service for Island?

By David Newble - Saturday, November 14, 2009

AN ENTERPRISING former IT trainer is poised to start his own postal service on the Island.

Peter Camplin, 54, of Hill Street in Ryde has obtained a Postcomm licence to deliver letters throughout the Isle of Wight.

His fledgling firm, 'Wightpost', would use specially made white postboxes, which he aims to place in shops in Ryde.

He will also sell a range of individually designed stamps and hopes to deliver the mail in a fleet of electric scooters to become the first 'green' postal service on the Island.

Mr Camplin, who is currently unemployed, is set to hold talks next week with entrepreneurs interested in funding his revolutionary scheme.

He hopes to obtain funding from the Isle of Wight Lottery for the scheme and also aims to obtain grants that promote green businesses.

Initially, Mr Camplin will run the service in Ryde and has already got newsagents in the town to agree to site his Wightpost boxes in their shops.

If the idea is successful, he hopes then to expand into Ventnor and Lake where people have also expressed an interest.

Mr Camplin told the County Press there used to be a postal service within the Isle of Wight, run by the Royal Mail, but the nationalised concern could no longer provide next-day delivery.

He said: "It is primarily about running a green service. You have a letter posted in Ventnor and it has to go all the way to the other side of Hampshire before it comes all the way back to the Island five days later.

"My new service is subject to funding but it could be up and running in a fortnight if that happens."

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