



NALC FACT SHEET

Department of Legislative and Political Affairs — National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO

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Vote-by-Mail

In polling places all over the country, time and again, election results are skewed by malfunctioning equipment, human error, and untrained poll workers. Voting through the mail fixes these problems by relying on something Americans trust: the United States Postal Service. Democracy is at its best when every citizen casts a vote. The National Association of Letter Carriers is convinced that mail-in voting could help ensure that every citizen can participate in our nations' democratic process. That is why the NALC supports H.R.1604, the Universal Vote by Mail Act.

Removing voting barriers:

There are 22 states that place restrictions on voters who would like to request a ballot through the mail. In these 22 states, a voter can be forced to jump through an array of hoops, ranging from providing a note from their physician to getting a notarized signature, to request a mail-in ballot. The Universal Vote by Mail Act removes these cumbersome restrictions and allows any citizen to request a ballot through the mail in a federal election.

Increase in voter turnout:

Oregon was the first state to send mail ballots to every voter. The state has conducted elections strictly through the mail for the last five elections cycles and the results have been astounding. In the 2008 presidential election, Oregon's voter turnout exceeded 85 percent, which was 24 percentage points higher than the national turnout.

As our personal and professional lives become busier and more demanding, too many of us do not have the opportunity to make it to the polls on Election Day. Mail-in voting is more convenient for all Americans. Voters would no longer have to take time off work or face long lines in

bad weather. Disabled citizens wishing to cast a vote would not have to make special arrangements to get to the polls. And all citizens could calmly consider difficult choices on their ballots in the privacy of their own home instead of under pressure of the confines of a polling booth.

Federal workers as protectors of the ballot:

As a trusted government agency, the USPS would be proud to protect the integrity of the American voting process. In 2008, the USPS was rated the No. 1 most trusted federal agency. Voters know their ballots will be safely and securely delivered while in the hands of a trusted letter carrier.

What can the 111th Congress do to give every voter a choice?

There is no question that allowing more citizens the option to cast a ballot through the mail would increase voter participation, but many states still feel the need to place heavy restrictions on their voters when it comes to mail-in voting regulations. In the 111th Congress, Rep. Susan Davis (D-CA) introduced H.R. 1604, the Universal Right to Vote by Mail Act of 2009. The measure would amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to allow any registered individual to cast a ballot in a federal election by mail, though it imposes a deadline for requesting the ballot and returning it to the appropriate state or local election official. The bill has been reported out of committee and is awaiting further action. NALC is working with the Senate to offer companion legislation to H.R. 1604 before the end of 111th Congress.

The NALC encourages Members of Congress to support Vote-by-Mail initiatives. For further information please contact the NALC office of Legislative and Political Affairs at 202-662-2833.