

# America tells Congress: U.S. Mail is not for sale



Above, left: The attendees at the rally in Tucson, AZ  
 Above: An NALC member explains why the Postal Service shouldn't be privatized to a local TV station in Scranton, PA.

“Don’t privatize the Postal Service!”

That was the message conveyed by thousands of letter carriers and other postal employees across the country on Monday, Oct. 8, as active and retired NALC and other postal union members in more than 200 cities joined allies from the labor and business communities along with local residents to draw attention to the threat of privatization of the U.S. Postal Service. The rallies were organized in conjunction with the American Postal Workers Union (APWU), the National Rural Letter Carriers’ Association (NRLCA) and the National Postal Mail Handlers Union (NPMHU).

Though the threat has mostly been under the radar, the drumbeat has grown steadily louder. In May, President Donald Trump created a task force to evaluate USPS operations and finances.

“The executive order creating the task force suggests that USPS’s universal service obligation (which requires it to deliver to every address in the nation for the same low price) is no longer necessary,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said. “Nothing could be further from the truth. In an age of e-commerce, mail-order prescriptions and voting by mail, affordable universal service is more important than ever.”

While the task force has yet to release its findings, the administration tipped its hand in the Office of Management and Budget’s (OMB) government-wide reorganization plan, which was released in June. The plan called for the privatization of the Postal Service.

“This would be a disaster for the country,” Rolando said. “Privatization—and the restructuring that the administration claims is necessary to prepare for it—would place affordable universal service at risk and would sacrifice this fundamental public service for private gain.”

Letter carriers and postal co-workers stepped up and delivered, keeping the message on rally day sharp, focused, consistent and powerful. Print, television and online media covered the rallies and their message extensively nationwide.

On the day of the rallies, the NALC president attended the one in Carmel, IN, where he was quoted by a number of media outlets. Rolando warned that “privatization posed a dire threat to affordable universal service in America, and would undermine the Postal Service’s central role in communities all over the country while sacrificing the common good for corporate profits.”

Among the key audiences for the message from these rallies were our representatives in Congress, with the aim of letting them know that both citizens and politicians support a strong—and a public—Postal Service. According to a Pew Research Center poll conducted earlier this year, the Post Office gets the highest ratings of any major government agency, with 88 percent of Americans expressing satisfaction.

Meanwhile, even before the rallies, NALC activists were encouraging House and Senate members to sign on to House Resolution 993 and Senate Resolution 633. The resolutions say that legislators “should take all appropriate measures to ensure that the United States Postal Service remains an independent establishment of the Federal Government and not subject to privatization.”

On Oct. 4, less than three months after it was announced in July, the number of co-sponsors on H.Res. 993 reached a bipartisan majority of 219 members of the House. As of press time, S.Res. 633 had 42 co-sponsors, nine shy of a majority.

“NALC applauds the representatives and senators who are co-sponsoring H.Res. 993 and S.Res. 633, respectively,” Executive Vice President Brian Renfro said at the rally in Chicago. “With a majority of the House and nearly half of the Senate in support of keeping the Postal Service an independent agency of the federal government, a key milestone has been reached in sending a message to the White House that privatization of the Postal Service is a bad idea and lacks sufficient congressional—or public—support.”

“While the momentum is strong,” Renfro added, “the battle is far from over.”

For more information on the rallies and other legislative challenges, see the November issue of *The Postal Record*.

## NALC national elections results

The National Election Committee, appointed at the Detroit National Convention to conduct the election of national officers for NALC for four-year terms, has announced the results.

Here they are, listed in ballot order. *Winners are highlighted in italics.* Note that voting for the regional national business agent offices was limited to NALC members in good standing from the respective regions:

- President**  
 — *Fredric Rolando, Sarasota, FL Br. 2148: 48,977*  
 — David Noble, Washington, DC Br. 142: 11,099
- Executive Vice President**  
 — *Brian Renfro, Hattiesburg, MS Br. 938: 42,708*  
 — Rachael Elmore, Freehold, NJ Br. 924: 16,064
- Vice President**  
 — *Lew Drass, Huntsville, AL Br. 462: 38,732*  
 — Sara Gresham, Newport News, VA Br. 609: 19,314
- Secretary-Treasurer**  
 — Jerry Kerner Jr., Baltimore, MD Br. 176: 15,317  
 — *Nicole Rhine, Lincoln, NE Br. 8: 42,981*
- Assistant Secretary-Treasurer**  
 — *Paul Barner, Roswell, GA Br. 4862: 35,315*  
 — Kathryn R. Myers, Billings, MT Br. 815: 22,153
- Director of City Delivery**  
 — *Christopher Jackson, Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100: 43,886*  
 — Thomas A. Houff, Richmond, VA Br. 496: 13,470
- Director, Safety and Health**  
 — *Manuel L. Peralta Jr., Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100: 42,006*  
 — Douglas L. Peters II, Lansing, MI Br. 122: 16,071

- Director of Life Insurance**  
 — Alan Nagata, Salt Lake City, UT Br. 111: 17,889  
 — *James W. Yates, Long Island Merged, NY Br. 6000: 39,449*
- Director, Health Benefit Plan**  
 — Robert R. Brunette, Sheboygan, WI Br. 102: 14,363  
 — *Stephanie Stewart, Central Iowa Mgd. Br. 352: 43,355*
- Director, Retired Members**  
 — *Daniel Toth, Lorain, OH Br. 583: 43,952*  
 — Thomas E. Fath, Decatur, IL Br. 317: 13,047
- National Trustees (three positions)**  
 — *Lawrence D. Brown Jr., Los Angeles, CA Br. 24: 41,832*  
 — *Michael Gill, South Florida Br. 1071: 40,170*  
 — Carol E. Paxton, New Orleans, LA Br. 124: 27,487  
 — Rolando Rodriguez, Anderson, IN Br. 489: 16,029  
 — *Mack I. Julion, Chicago Br. 11: 35,138*
- Region 2 National Business Agent**  
 — Michael Wahluquist, Salt Lake City, UT Br. 111: 1,084  
 — *Nick Vafiades, Longview, WA Br. 2214: 1,300*
- Region 4 National Business Agent**  
 — *Dan Versluis, Tucson, AZ Br. 704: 1,801*  
 — Anita Lewallen, Conway, AR Br. 1592: 1,337
- Region 9 National Business Agent**  
 — *Lynne Pendleton, Central Florida Br. 1091: 3,481*  
 — Kenneth R. Gibbs Jr., Brunswick, GA Br. 313: 2,977

The official announcement will be in the November issue of *The Postal Record*.

## Branch Officers Training set for Orlando

NALC’s Branch Officers Training has been set for Orlando, FL, in January. Branch Officers Training sessions consist of three and a half days of educational seminars tailored to assist branch presidents, vice presidents, treasurers, recording secretaries, financial secretaries and trustees in the performance of their duties.

The training covers the basics for financial officers: taxes; accounting systems and maintenance of proper controls; reporting to the Department of Labor; fiduciary duties under the Landrum-Griffin Act; bonding of branch officers; and IRS reporting requirements.

Additional training topics include the *NALC Constitution* and branch bylaws; branch operations and identifying branch policies; maintaining accurate and complete meeting minutes; member notification requirements; record-keeping; branch elections; branch dues; and how to read a dues roster.

Branch Officers Training will take place Jan. 7-10 in Orlando, FL. The registration deadline for this training session is Dec. 3. Room rate (single/double) is \$129 plus tax.

Use the form below to register. **Note: Please do not make airline reservations until you receive an acceptance letter.**

## Branch Officers Training registration form

Please register me for the following NALC Branch Officers Training seminar:

Jan. 7-10 in Orlando, FL  
 Registration deadline is Dec. 3. Room rate [single/double] is \$129 plus tax.\*

PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(one registrant per form, please)

Branch or state position \_\_\_\_\_

Branch # \_\_\_\_\_ Branch city \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Home address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number (required) \_\_\_\_\_

**Send to:**  
**Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine**  
**National Association of Letter Carriers**  
**100 Indiana Avenue NW**  
**Washington, DC 20001-2144**  
**FAX: 202-737-1540**

\* Please do not make airline reservations until you receive an acceptance letter.

## NALC Disaster Relief Foundation

As announced at the 2018 NALC Convention in Detroit, the union has established the NALC Disaster Relief Foundation to alleviate the suffering of members affected by natural disasters, including earthquakes, tornadoes, hurricanes and wildfires. That need is all the more urgent as letter carriers attempt to recover from the damage wrought by Hurricanes Florence and Michael in the southeast, Typhoon Mangkhut in the Pacific and wildfires raging through California.



A letter carrier attempts to deliver through debris in North Carolina.

**Branches or members that would like to make a donation now may send a check or money order to:**  
**NALC Disaster Relief Foundation**  
**100 Indiana Ave. NW**  
**Washington, DC 20001-2144**

The foundation was created to fill a need identified by many branches in the face of the disasters last year, including the wildfires that ravaged northern and southern California, as well as the hurricanes that swept through South Texas, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Florida Keys.

“Branches wanted to know where they could send desperately needed supplies and money, but there wasn’t a central location,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said. “That’s why we created this foundation, to reflect the will of the members and make it easy for them to help others in need quickly and efficiently.”

The foundation has been set up to function in two ways: by providing hands-on relief and by receiving donations as a means to offer financial grants.

NALC is in the process of creating response teams throughout the country. People on the teams will receive disaster relief training from charitable organizations and government agencies, including the American Red Cross, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Foundation volunteers recently were activated to go to North Carolina to help letter carriers recover from the destruction wrought by Hurricane Florence. They offered physical assistance—helping to remove water-logged furniture and tear out soaked drywall—as well as emotional assistance for individuals who had been overwhelmed by the aftermath.

Additionally, basic supplies, including uniforms and food, will be available for those who need them in the future.

The foundation also will provide financial support through grants. Any NALC member who has faced hardship as a result of a natural disaster will be able to apply for assistance. The foundation’s board of directors will consider the hardship applications and will issue grants on an objective basis to eligible individuals as funds are available. Job performance

or history of donations to the foundation will not be considered as part of the selection process. The application for these grants is being developed.

The foundation is applying for 501(c)(3) status to allow people who donate to the fund to write off the donations from their taxes. Anyone who would like to make a donation now may send a check or money order to the address below. The union is working on accepting donations through credit cards and electronic funds transfer (EFT) online.

It is anticipated that financial support for the foundation will be provided by NALC, branch fundraising events, donations from members and donations from corporate sponsors.

Any member wishing to be a potential Disaster Relief Foundation volunteer should send a note about his or her interest to the address below.

“We hope that the foundation will become an invaluable lifeline for our sisters and brothers in need, in the true spirit of solidarity,” Rolando said.

The address for the foundation is NALC Disaster Relief Foundation, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.



Volunteers from the NALC Disaster Relief Foundation tear out drenched drywall in a North Carolina letter carrier’s home after Hurricane Florence had receded.

## Former NALC Vice President Hutchins has died

Former NALC Vice President Lawrence “Larry” G. Hutchins Sr. died on Oct. 9. He was 87. Hutchins started his letter carrier career in 1957, joining Richmond, VA Branch 496. He served several terms as branch president and vice president. He also was Virginia State Association president and newsletter editor before becoming a regional administrative assistant.

In 1980, NALC President Vincent Sombrotto appointed Hutchins national business agent for the District of Columbia region. He was elected in 1987 to the office of national vice president, a position he held until his retirement in 1994.

“Brother Hutchins was a true champion of letter carriers,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said. “He made an incredible difference at all levels of the union, from Richmond to the mid-Atlantic region to Washington, DC.”

Funeral services were held on Oct. 15 at Mimms Funeral Home, 1827 Hull St., Richmond. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to FeedMore Central Virginia, Nashville Kidney Foundation and Florence Neal Cooper Smith Sickle Cell Professorship.



## Installation of officers set for Dec. 1

The installation of NALC’s 28 elected national officers for four-year terms will take place in Washington, DC, from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on the evening of Saturday, Dec. 1, at the Marriott Marquis Washington, DC, 901 Massachusetts Ave. NW.

Tickets for the event are available through the NALC secretary-treasurer’s office for \$80 per person. **Full payment (payable to “Secretary-Treasurer, NALC”), along with the order form, must be received no later than Thursday, Nov. 1.**

The order form for tickets was printed in the October *Postal Record*, which is available at nalc.org. Upon receipt of payment, tables will be reserved on a first-come, first-served basis only for those who purchase a block of at least eight tickets. The maximum number of seats at each table is eight. Individuals or smaller parties purchasing tickets will be assigned to “open seating” tables.

For those who have purchased tickets, the person authorized to pick up tickets listed on the order form can do so in the secretary-treasurer’s office at NALC Headquarters between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 30. Additionally, he or she can pick up tickets at the registration area outside the Marquis Ballroom at the Marquis Washington, DC, between 2 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. on Dec. 1.

The NALC hotel room rate at the Marriott Marquis Washington, DC is \$179 standard single/double. The rate is good for the nights of Nov. 30 and Dec. 1 only. All reservations must be made directly through the Marriott Marquis Washington, DC, 901 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001. If reserving online, you can only reserve a single room. To reserve a double room, you must call the hotel at 855-821-4281 to request the special NALC Installation Dinner rate. The cut-off for the hotel rate is Nov. 8.

Valet parking is available at the hotel for the price of \$35 per night.

## Consider NALC HBP during Open Season

The NALC Health Benefit Plan (HBP) gives you and your family “First Class Benefits, Packaged and Delivered.”

Open Season for choosing a health plan through the Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) Program is Nov. 12 through Dec. 10. You can learn more about the NALC HBP in the special insert in the November issue of *The Postal Record*.

“The NALC Health Benefit Plan never stops improving—it keeps up with the latest in medicine and provides innovative new ways to support health,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said. “Whether you are a new carrier, have been working a while, or are retired, the Plan may be the right choice for you and your family.”

In partnership with Cigna, the Plan offers a comprehensive High Option health benefit package and a fee-for-service plan with a preferred provider (PPO) network that offers generous benefits with low out-of-pocket costs. The PPO network includes more than 2.9 million doctors and specialists and thousands of medical facilities. Chances are your doctor already is part of the network, but to make sure, call the PPO Locator line at 877-220-NALC (6252).

The High Option Plan pays for a wide variety of preventive care treatments and tests for adults and children at 100 percent when you use a PPO provider. You pay only a \$20 copayment for each primary care or specialist office visit when the services are rendered by a PPO provider. The calendar-year deductible for the High Option Plan is \$300 per person and \$600 per family.

Prescription medication also is covered under the High Option Plan at reasonable rates. Active letter carriers pay just \$7.99 for a 90-day supply of generic medications available on our NALC Preferred generic list when purchased by mail order or through the Maintenance Choice Program at any participating pharmacy retailer. Generic medications on the NALC Select Generic list are just \$5 for a 90-day supply for mail order and Maintenance Choice purchases for active carriers. If you use generic medication to treat hypertension, diabetes or asthma, your costs may be lower. Non-formulary and specialty drugs have different rates; see the Plan brochure for more information.

The Plan is always working to improve by keeping up with the latest medical advances and recommendations by health professionals. For 2019, the Plan has added to its list of preventive benefits to help keep you and your family at your best, including pre-eclampsia screening for pregnant women, a new vaccine for preventing shingles, expanded counseling for skin cancer prevention in children and the Transform Diabetes Care Program. It also has lowered the amount you pay for certain medications to treat hypertension, diabetes and asthma. Refer to the Plan’s 2019 brochure for a complete list of changes.

With the Health Benefit Plan, you also get access to a wealth of programs to help maintain or improve your health. They include the Quit for Life smoking cessation program; the Weight Talk weight-loss coaching program; Your Health First disease management program, with personalized medical care programs for people with chronic illnesses; the Healthy Rewards discount program for savings of up to 60 percent on vision and hearing care, fitness clubs and other benefits; and the Health Assessment, an online tool that analyzes your health-related responses and gives you a personalized plan to achieve your specific health goals.

These are just a few of the many benefits of the NALC Health Benefit Plan. For a list of more benefits and changes for 2019, and to compare the NALC Health Benefit Plan with other plans, go to [opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/healthcare-plan-information/compare-plans](http://opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/healthcare-plan-information/compare-plans).

These great benefits come at reasonable rates. In 2019, the active letter carrier’s share of the High Option premium will be \$81.43 bi-weekly for “Self Only,” \$193.86 bi-weekly for “Self Plus One” and \$174.31 bi-weekly for “Self and Family.” For retired carriers, the rates are \$183.37 per month for “Self Only,” \$434.85 per month for “Self Plus One” and \$393.49 per month for “Self and Family.” Different rates and benefits apply to the Value Option Plan and Consumer-Driven Health Plan (CDHP) and to other types of employees; see the Plan’s official brochure for details.

The information in this article is just a summary of some of the features of the NALC HBP. Detailed information on the Plan can be found in the official 2018 brochure (RI 71-009) at [nalchbp.org](http://nalchbp.org). All benefits are subject to the definitions, limitations and exclusions set forth in the official brochure.

“Please consider the NALC Health Benefit Plan and its many benefits during this Open Season,” Rolando said. “I think you’ll find that it’s right for you and your family.”



**National Association of Letter Carriers**  
 100 Indiana Ave. NW  
 Washington, DC 20001-2144  
 202-393-4695 | [www.nalc.org](http://www.nalc.org)

**Fredric V. Rolando, President**  
**EDITORIAL STAFF:**  
 Philip Dine, Director of Communications and Media Relations  
 Mia Shea, Designer/Web Editor  
 Rick Hodges, Writer/Editor  
 Jenessa Wagner, Writer/Editor  
 Donna Porewicz, Editorial Assistant

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