



Photo by David Schrage



America tells Congress

KEEP 6-DAY THE LAW





Opposite page:

NALC President Fredric Rolando (top l) addressed a crowd in Boston about the need to protect Saturday delivery.

Activists in Tennessee (top r) showed off their signs.

The large gathering in New York (bottom l) was hard to miss.

“Don’t dismantle the Postal Service; keep six-day mail delivery!”

That was the main message conveyed by thousands of letter carriers across America on Sunday, March 24, as active and retired NALC members in scores of cities joined family members, friends, co-workers, allies from the business and labor communities and members of the general public to raise awareness in Congress and in the news media about just how essential the Postal Service and Saturday mail is for tens of millions of Americans and businesses.

“Reducing service by one day a week would impose hardships, raise costs to our customers and drive business away. It would do nothing to fix the financial problems facing the Postal Service, but rather worsen them and set the USPS on a path to destruction,” said NALC President Fredric Rolando, who led one such rally in Boston. “Ending Saturday delivery, which is indispensable to many rural residents, the elderly, small businesses, the millions who lack access to reliable Internet service, and many others, would be the beginning of the end.”

The early springtime date for the day of action meant that some rallygoers on the East Coast and in the Midwest had to endure sometimes heavy snowfall while their compatriots in places like Boise and Los Angeles held up signs and chanted slogans while wearing short-sleeve shirts and shorts. But while the weather might have varied wildly from one region to the next, the letter carrier message on rally day remained sharp, focused and consistent.

“The Postal Service itself is the hub of a \$1.3 trillion national mailing

industry, with 7.5 million private-sector jobs,” Rolando said later. “Ending Saturday delivery—a 17 percent reduction in service—would save taxpayers nothing, because the Postal Service funds itself solely through the sale of stamps and other postal products.”

In print and on the air

Judging from the hundreds of news reports about the event that continue to pour in to NALC Headquarters in Washington, letter carriers succeeded in debunking the notion that eliminating Saturday will help solve the financial problems facing the USPS.

Georgia State Association President Don Griggs, for example, told *The Augusta Chronicle* that what has hurt the Postal Service is legislation passed in 2006 that requires USPS to pay for future postal workers’ retiree health insurance decades in advance—a mandate that has forced USPS to come up with billions of dollars up-front for future annuitants when that money could be used to address today’s financial troubles. “We have an uphill battle, but anything worth having is worth fighting for,” Griggs said. “The battle is not over.”

Below: Activists in Arizona heard the support of passing motorists.

Bottom: Residents in Guam turned out to make their voices heard.





At a rally in Pittsburgh's Northside neighborhood, Mon-Yough, PA Branch 332 President Paul Rozzi told *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* that the country can't afford the loss of about 80,000 Postal Service jobs that would result from cutting a day of delivery. "Thirty percent of businesses say they cannot operate without Saturday service," Rozzi said. "Who would go against that?"

Rallying in the Pacific Northwest, Portland, OR Branch 82 activist Kevin Card told KVAL-TV that he thinks rural communities would particularly feel the changes, because residents there rely on USPS and often cannot pay their bills or do business online. "The Postal Service is incredibly valuable to them, and it's something they want to see maintained six days a week," he said.

Down the coast in Fresno, CA, KFNS-TV covered the local rally and spoke with Central California Branch 231's



Rallies in Michigan (top l), Colorado (top r), Idaho (above) and Louisiana (below) turned out NALC members, as well as friends, family members, veterans, seniors and concerned citizens.

No other public or private entity has to comply with a similar mandate, Perth Amboy, NJ Branch 457 President Raymond Winegrad told the *Home News Tribune*—and the negative impact is broad. "This is not just about a union, this is about the community," he added. "It is about businesses that thrive because of us. It is about the clergy and the elderly that depend on us. It's about food banks. We do more than just deliver mail."



Eric Ellis, who informed viewers that cutting Saturday delivery is not the answer to the Post Office's financial problems. "For the Postal Service to survive, we need to grow the business, find innovative ways to keep the business," Ellis said. Meanwhile, Fresno's KGPE-TV ran an informal poll on its website, asking viewers whether they supported the decision to stop Saturday mail delivery. A whopping 82 percent of respondents answered "no."

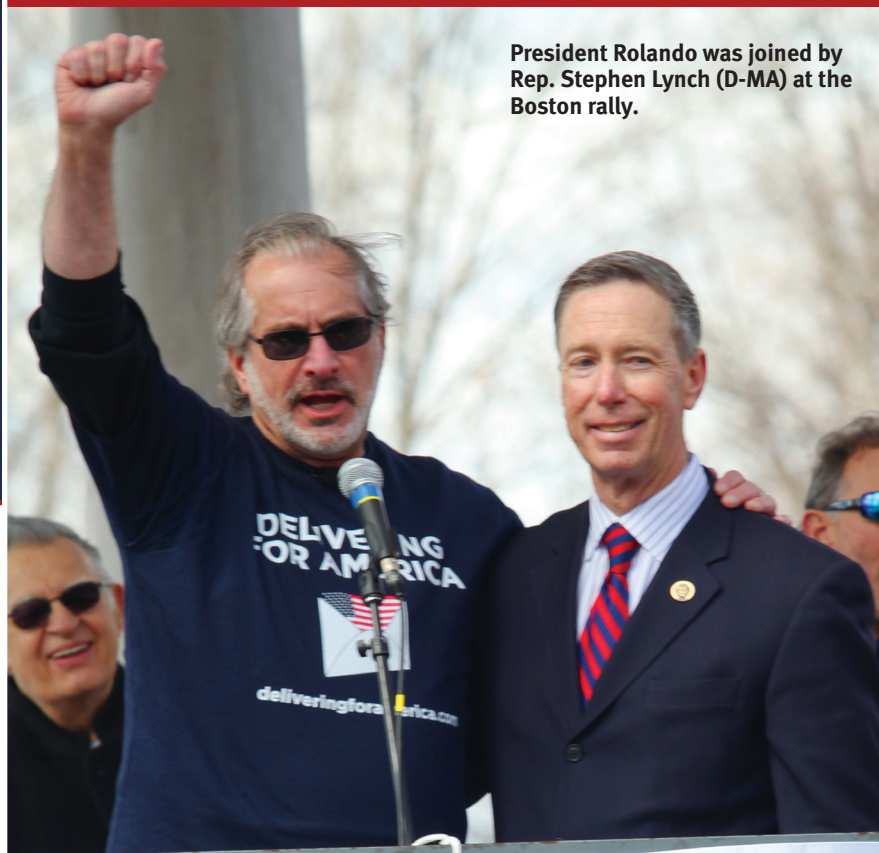
Preventing a 'death spiral'

Albuquerque, NM Branch 504 member John Trujillo told KRQU-TV that cutting Saturday mail is not the right answer to the Postal Service's financial problems. "New Mexico is a small economy that's dependent on Saturday delivery," he said. "My grandmother waits for the mailman every day, as many New Mexicans do—waiting for medication, waiting for checks in the mail."

"I just ask Congress to do the right thing: Fix that mandate before you try to do anything to service," Tulsa, OK Branch 1358 President Terry Davis told KWTW-TV, noting that no House or Senate member from Oklahoma has signed on to any current postal reform legislation.

Service also was on the mind of Rapid City, SD Branch 1225 letter carrier Richard Hatzenbuehler. "What happens every time we make cuts is it hurts customer service," he told *The Rapid City Journal*. "Then we lose customers and it just gets worse."

Dozens of rally-goers in Springfield, IL, braved an early-spring snowstorm to bring their messages to residents and the news media. "No company can take away a day of service or close their doors for a day and expect that that's



President Rolando was joined by Rep. Stephen Lynch (D-MA) at the Boston rally.

Photo by David Schragger

Lynch bill addresses FERS surplus

Rep. Stephen Lynch (D-MA) on March 5 introduced H.R. 961, the Postal Service Stabilization Act, a bill crafted to address the billions of dollars the Postal Service has overpaid into its account within the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). The measure calls for the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to calculate the FERS surplus fairly and accurately and to return the overpaid amount to the USPS so it can apply the funds toward its financial obligations.

"The NALC is grateful to Congressman Lynch for taking the lead in addressing this nagging problem of pension over-funding," NALC President Fredric Rolando said, "and we are pleased to fully support H.R. 961 as a sensible and fair approach to providing the Postal Service with much-needed financial relief."

Lynch is the ranking member of the House subcommittee with Postal Service oversight. In the last Congress (2011-2012), he was the

author of H.R. 1351, which addressed the postal pension surplus in the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS). Lynch currently is working on a new version of that bill for the new Congress.

Independent audits have shown that, since 1970, the Postal Service has overpaid its FERS and CSRS liabilities by tens of billions of dollars, because of a calculation formula used by the Office of Personnel Management that fails to consider the unique position of the USPS within the federal government.

According to a 2013 report by the Hay Group, an independent actuarial consulting firm, if OPM were to fairly adjust its calculations to account for postal-specific factors rather than government-wide ones, it could result in a postal FERS surplus of at least \$12 billion, instead of the \$3 billion figure OPM derived using government-wide factors. Hay's separate audit of the Postal Service's CSRS account in 2010 revealed a surplus of up to \$75 billion.

The power of Saturday mail

On March 23, Cedar Rapids, IA Branch 373 letter carrier Greg Januska shared on the NALC's Facebook page this positive story about the power of Saturday mail:

I had one of those "happy to be a mailman" moments today. As I drove up to a mailbox today (a Saturday, the day the postmaster general wants to take away from the American people), two people were waiting by the mailbox. I assume it was a father and his teenage daughter.

I asked them why they were waiting for me, and they said, "Because of this letter—AND THIS ONE TOO!"

The girl had just received a postcard from friends who had spent St. Patrick's Day in Ireland. The letter was from a college that the girl had applied to.

As I drove away, I looked in my mirror to see if she was going to open the letter from the college. I could see her tearing the envelope open, and after a few seconds, I could see her hopping around excitedly, reading the words that she had been hoping to hear!

It made me so happy that I was the one who brought her the good news, on a Saturday. She didn't have to wait two more days to hear the news. I delivered life-changing news... on a Saturday.

You can connect with NALC on Facebook at facebook.com/nalc-national, and on Twitter at twitter.com/nalc_national. Links to both of these can be found at nalc.org.

Activists in Texas (below) and Mississippi (bottom) turned out to spread the word that everyone should alert their legislators to the need to save Saturday delivery.



going to increase revenue," Region 3 Regional Administrative Assistant Tony Hutson told WICS-TV. "It's going to send more people away."

The weather was a good deal warmer and nicer in Mobile, AL, where Branch 469's Nashid Rushdan joined dozens of letter carriers and other supporters to show their support for six-day mail. "A lot of small businesses depend on their mail and six-day delivery," Rushdan told WPMI-TV. "The answer is to provide better service to the customer."

"This would start a death spiral, economically, if we lose that day of delivery," New Bern, NC Branch 780 member Brian Demato told the *Raleigh News Observer*. "If that doesn't work out, the next step is, 'Well, maybe we should go to four-day delivery,' then three, two, one—down to nothing."

It makes no sense to degrade what's clearly working to fix Congress' mistake, President Rolando said. "The idea of cutting a day of mail delivery is part of an irrational business formula that would drive mail out of the system and reduce postal revenue.

"Our message on March 24, which rang loud and clear across America, is one that we continue to hammer home today," he said: "Congress should not dismantle the Postal Service; it needs to fix the pre-funding fiasco it created and not allow the postmaster general to slash services in ways that hurt the public, businesses and the USPS itself."

Visit nalc.org to check out more than 2,000 photos from events across the country, as well as dozens of links to print, radio and television coverage of events.



The weather around the country ranged from warm to cold, sunny to snowy, but that didn't turn away people in Maine (r), South Dakota, (center) or South Carolina (bottom).



Temporary reprieve for 6-day mail

Thanks largely to thousands of NALC activists' phone calls, letters and e-mail messages, six-day mail delivery retained—for now—its decades-long status as the law of the land on March 26 when President Barack Obama signed a continuing resolution (CR) that will keep the federal government operating through the current fiscal year, which ends on Sept. 30.

But while the CR does retain the clause that mandates the Postal Service to deliver the mail six days a week, the road to keeping the six-day mandate in the law was by no means an easy one.

In the House, the new chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Rep. Harold Rogers (R-KY), preserved the language in the House's version of the bill—despite efforts by Oversight and Government Reform Chairman Darrell Issa (R-CA) to have the six-day text removed. The full House later approved the bill and sent it across the Hill to the Senate.

There, Sens. Tom Coburn (R-OK) and John McCain (R-AZ) led a separate push to remove the language from the Senate measure. But following an intensive lobbying effort by NALC members on March 20, the Senate approved the bill with the six-day mail language intact. The House gave its OK to this measure the next day and sent it to President Obama for his signature.

"While this bit of good news gives us a little room to breathe for now," President Rolando said, "the CR preserves Saturday mail in the law only through September 30, while Postmaster General Donahoe still threatens to end Saturday mail delivery on his own in August.

"Until six-day delivery is protected beyond September 30, our battle to keep it continues," he said.

Legal opinion on cutting 6-day mail

Six-day mail delivery received support from a fresh angle on March 21, when the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a legal opinion stating that Postmaster General Donahoe's claim that the Postal Service has the right to cut the mail delivery schedule from six days to five days "rests upon a faulty USPS premise" and adding that there is no legislative authority from Congress allowing the change.

"The GAO agrees with an ever-growing chorus of voices that the postmaster general doesn't have the law on his side in this matter," President Rolando said. "He should obey the law as a matter of principle, rather than cut a day of mail delivery and disrupt the nation's only universal delivery network."

The GAO wrote that USPS is bound by current law and by the current continuing resolution to fund the federal government, which requires "USPS to continue 6-day delivery and rural delivery of mail at not less than the 1983 level"—that is, full mail delivery six days a week.

The March 21 legal opinion was requested by Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-VA) shortly after Donahoe announced on Feb. 6 that he would unilaterally end

Carriers and our allies lined up in Pennsylvania (below) and Nebraska (bottom) to deliver our message.



Using technology to our advantage

In the weeks leading up to the national March 24 rallies, NALC continued its ongoing embrace of new communications technologies to quickly reach and inform as many members as possible about what's at stake in the ongoing threats to Saturday mail delivery service.

In early March, President Rolando used the e-Activist Network to send several national and targeted messages to NALC members, urging them to ask key congressional representatives for their support in keeping the six-day language in the continuing resolution in both chambers' measures.

On Thursday, March 21, the president spoke with thousands of NALC members on a national tele-town hall conference call to discuss the following Sunday's national rallies.

And Rolando reached out to tech-savvy—and text-savvy—activists via three separate national text messages in March to ratchet up member support for the national day of action.

Miss out on any of these? Need to sign up or update your contact information? Head to nalc.org and click the link there on the home page to make sure we have the right information for you, to make sure you get on the list.

Saturday mail delivery beginning in August. Visit "Latest News" on nalc.org to find links to the GAO opinion and a news release from Rep. Connolly about it—and be sure to check out the next issue of *The Postal Record* for an in-depth Q-and-A with Connolly.

National news media covers 6-day mail developments

Congress' passage of the continuing resolution, the release of the GAO opinion and the lead-up to the "USA for 6-Day" rallies produced voluminous news coverage of the six-day mail debate.

On the Friday before the rallies, President Rolando spoke about six-day delivery as a guest on Ed Schultz's national radio show, and the president also was the first person quoted in a CNNMoney story about the issue. "We fully expect the Postal Service Board of Governors and the postmaster general

to follow the law and the expressed will of Congress about maintaining six-day delivery," Rolando said. "We do not expect to have a legal fight." He added later that the NALC is prepared to mount such a fight if necessary.

The president was quoted prominently in a March 22 Associated Press story, which ran in *USA Today* as well as numerous other news outlets. Meanwhile, an article by the Reuters news service benefited from NALC's input and included the fact that most of the Postal Service's red ink stems from the pre-funding mandate. Reuters' story contained a quote from Rolando as well.

Rolando also had his say on the subject of six-day mail in a Bloomberg story, ahead of quotes from Rep. Issa and Sen. Coburn.

You can find links to this coverage and more on the Postal Facts page at nalc.org.





Hundreds of media outlets covered the event, like those in Alaska (l) and Georgia (below). Rallies ranged in size from only a few participants, to some much larger, including this one in Connecticut (bottom).



NALC in the news

Since the ongoing debate surrounding six-day mail delivery directly affects the work letter carriers do, it's only natural that the NALC has taken an active role in these discussions, from providing op-ed pieces to newspapers large and small to serving as thought-leaders and experts on the matter for a variety of news media outlets.

NALC President Fredric Rolando reached a national audience on Friday, Feb. 15, with an op-ed in *USA Today*. "Ending Saturday delivery," he wrote, "would jeopardize the USPS' future by sacrificing its competitive advantage, would hurt tens of millions of Americans—and it wouldn't even solve the agency's financial woes." The president delivered a similar message in the *South Bend [IN] Tribune* on Feb. 6 and in the *Montgomery [AL] Advertiser* on Feb. 12.

On Feb. 21, Rolando was a guest on Ed Schultz's national radio show; he was invited back on March 22 to discuss the reasons behind the March 24 national day of action.

On March 19, the president used an op-ed in *The Providence [RI] Journal* to promote the rally as well as clear up some misconceptions about the Postal Service. Two days later, an *Examiner* story covered the Government Accountability Office's finding regarding six-day delivery's legal standing (see page 9) and quoted President Rolando: "We fully expect the Postal Service's board of governors and the postmaster general to follow the law

and the expressed will of Congress about maintaining six-day delivery. We do not expect to have a legal fight."

National spotlight

Thanks to the NALC's ongoing outreach efforts, the national news media have begun to provide better and more thorough coverage of the Postal Service's plight. On Feb. 9, NPR Weekend Edition Saturday host Scott Simon invited Philip Rubio, assistant professor of history at North Carolina A&T State University and a former letter carrier, to talk about how the proposed series of cuts in Saturday delivery, office closures and other measures would affect groups that have historically relied on jobs with the Postal Service.

On Feb. 7, *Washington Post* blogger Diane Reese—the daughter of a letter carrier—posted a piece on the newspaper's "She The People" blog, rightly noting, among other things, that the Postal Service receives no taxpayer money and that pre-funding is largely responsible for its current financial crisis. Later, a Feb. 12 opinion piece in the *Post* by *The Nation's*

Ohio congressional visit

The Ohio State Association's legislative visit to Washington coincided with a late-winter snowstorm that threatened the Metro-DC area. The Office of Personnel Management decided to close Washington-area federal government offices on March 6. Nevertheless, a number of Buckeye State letter carrier activists forged ahead with their planned trip to Capitol Hill. On March 7, they discussed letter carrier concerns with Sen. Sherrod Brown (D) and Reps. Bob Gibbs (R-7th) and Michael Turner (R-10th), and they spoke about our issues with staff members in the offices of Sen. Rob Portman (R) and House members in other Ohio districts.





Letter carriers and other activists stood tall in Washington (top), Ohio (center) and Missouri (above).

editor-in-chief Katrina vanden Heuvel noted that “Congress has the power to block the USPS from cutting Saturday service. It should begin there. This is a public service worth saving.”

The next day, a commentary supportive of the Postal Service appeared on *The Wall Street Journal's* MarketWatch website.

Writing on Feb. 11 for *The Huffington Post*, Campaign for America's Future fellow Dave Johnson debunked some of the myths behind the Postal Service's so-called financial crisis. The *Huffington Post* on Feb. 21 hosted a panel webinar discussion about the Postal Service and invited former NALC Executive Vice President Jim Williams to take part as an expert on postal matters.

Three popular myths about the Postal Service got “busted” March 4 by the business-focused and widely read website, *The Motley Fool*. A week later, *NBC News* ran a story about the postmaster general's unilateral plan to cut Saturday mail delivery and began its report by using a clip from NALC's “Say ‘Hello’” TV commercial (see the March 2013 *Postal Record*).

Regional representation

On the regional level, in response to a Feb. 12 *Dubuque, IA Telegraph Herald* article about the Postal Service, Region 5 Regional Administrative Assistant Mike Birkett wrote a letter to the paper's editor that ran on Feb. 23 and that debunked several postal myths the earlier story promoted.

The night before the March 24 rallies, Region 15 National Business Agent Larry Cirelli was a guest on “The Mike Feder Show” on Sirius XM's “Left” channel to talk about the day of action and about the real reasons behind the

Postal Service's financial problems. Region 3 RAA Tony Hutson performed similar duties in a March 19 article in *Springfield, IL's State Journal-Register*.

Branch and state association officers have continued their success in gaining access to news publications as well. For example, Buffalo-Western New York Branch 3 President Bob McLennan's letter to the editor of *The Buffalo News* was published on Feb. 13. Across the state on the same day, Long Island City, NY Branch 357 President Dave Van Aken was quoted in a *Queens Ledger* story about the postmaster general's plan to cut mail delivery service. Van Aken also had an editorial published in the Feb. 15 *Woodside Herald* and a letter to the editor of *The Queens Courier* published on Feb. 22.

Patrick Hill, president of Wichita, KS Branch 201, saw his letter published on Feb. 18 in *The Wichita Eagle*, the largest newspaper in Kansas. A letter by Idaho State Association President John Paige ran Feb. 21 in the *Twin Falls Times-News* and in *Nampa's Idaho Press-Tribune*. And Indiana State Association President John Triplett and Indianapolis Branch 39 President Paul Toms both were quoted prominently in a Feb. 22 *Indianapolis Star* column by Dan Carpenter.

On March 2, Palm Beach, FL Branch 1690 President Rick Abbarno's letter to the editor ran in *The Palm Beach Post*, Florida's fifth-largest newspaper with a circulation of about 120,000.

Andy Tuttle, president of Lawrence, KS Branch 104, saw his letter to the editor of *Lawrence Journal-World* get published on March 21. That same morning, Janesville, WI Branch 572 President Jeff Wagner was an in-studio guest on *WCLO-AM's* “Your Talk



Show” to discuss the Postal Service’s financial problems.

The people speak

Cedar Rapids, IA Branch 373 letter carrier Andrea House’s letter to the editor of *The Daily Iowan*, the University of Iowa’s daily newspaper, was published March 8. Here, she outlined in detail some background behind the postmaster general’s Feb. 6 announcement regarding plans to reduce mail service. A week later, a letter by Mark Fallis, a retired letter carrier from Central Iowa Merged Branch 352, was published by the *Iowa Labor News*.

St. Louis, MO Branch 343 scribe Tom Schulte’s letter to the editor of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, the largest newspaper in Missouri, was published on Feb. 14. A letter from retired Central Maine Merged Branch 391 member John Curtis ran on Feb. 21 in the *Bangor [ME] Daily News*. And Douglas Fordyce, Buffalo-Western New York Branch 3’s legislative and political chairman, had his op-ed piece published on Feb. 26 in *The Buffalo News*.

NALC’s effectiveness at getting the word out has shown through in several prominent ways, with newspaper editors, postal customers and letter carrier allies often writing thoughtful pieces, letters and op-eds for local newspapers. One such pro-postal editorial was published Feb. 10 in Macon, GA’s *The Telegraph*.

John Nichols, who covers the Postal Service for *The Nation*, noted on Feb. 8: “Taking Saturdays out of the rotation deals a serious blow to existing absentee and vote-by-mail operations, and reduces the likelihood that this voter-friendly approach will be expanded.” Nichols also is associate editor of Madison, WI’s *The Capital Times*, where, on

Feb. 14, he provided in-depth analysis of the problems with the postmaster general’s announcement about Saturday mail delivery service.

Letter writers on Feb. 21 in the *Cape Cod [MA] Times* and the *Muskegon [MI] Chronicle* showed a real understanding about how pre-funding is behind the Postal Service’s financial crisis, while Virginia Tech graduate student Robert Davis penned a Feb. 22 op-ed about the Postal Service for *The Roanoke [VA] Times*.

Author and Skidmore College professor Catherine Golden’s op-ed in support of the Postal Service was published on Feb. 25 in the *Albany, NY Times Union*. The same day, a letter to the editor of the *Times Union* responded to an earlier op-ed that supported eliminating Saturday mail delivery. And a writer from Bremerton, WA, correctly pointed to pre-funding as the cause of the Postal Service’s financial problem, in his March 1 letter to the editor of the *Central Kitsap Reporter*.

Letter carriers saving lives was the focus of an article in the March/April edition of *Washington Monthly*. The DC-based magazine gave several examples of the effectiveness of our Carrier Alert program and how the postmaster general’s plan to cut Saturday mail delivery service could affect customers’ lives by limiting the effectiveness of a neighborhood’s regular “eyes and ears.”

On March 22, Ed Wytkind, president of the AFL-CIO’s Transportation Trades Department—which represents several million transportation workers in the public and private sectors—wrote a blog post supporting the March 24 national “USA for 6-Day” rallies.

See links to these stories and more at nalc.org under “Postal Facts.” **PR**



The activists who came out to rally in New Jersey (top), Virginia (center), Indiana (above) and Oregon (below), like all of the activists who rallied nationwide, helped convince Congress that it must oppose the postmaster general’s plan to end Saturday mail service.

