

At the table or on the menu



Brian L. Renfro

Nearly four months into my presidency, I find myself reflecting on where our union is and how we reached this important period of transition. Going from executive vice president to president of the world's greatest union has been transformational for me. Every day, I am in awe of our members, especially as we negotiate what I believe will be a successful and beneficial contract.

In the four short months since the installation, I've had the chance to travel across the country and visit with our members at regional trainings and other events. I've had countless conversations with our folks, and the energy of this union feels positive and hopeful. We opened negotiations with the Postal Service and our bargaining

committees are working tirelessly to ensure that our goals are met.

The dust has settled on postal reform, and the financial stability that we said the law would provide is now visible. While we still have important priorities on Capitol Hill and will continue to use our opportunities to advance these goals, for the first time in decades we don't have a "fight" on our hands. However, that can change quickly, as history has taught us. We must always remain ready by continuing to strengthen and grow our legislative and political networks to defend our rights.

In this reflective period, we can plan for the future on all fronts. This is particularly true for the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF), our political action committee (PAC). Those of you who have heard me speak at your state or regional meetings this year have heard me explain our broad agenda. At top of my mind is our power and what we can achieve when united. As I have said, nearly 94 percent of city letter carriers choose to join our union. It makes us one of the most well-organized unions in the labor movement. That strength and solidarity are at the heart of our union. It is what motivates me every day to push for ultimate success in all of our union's business.

Our extraordinary success in organizing, and in countless other union activities, prompts the question: Why is it that only 10 percent of our members give to LCPF? Do people not want to? Do our political efforts not attract contributors? Is it too hard to sign up?

The answer to all of these questions is a resounding no.

I believe that the reason a majority of our members do not give to LCPF is because they have never been asked. I am confident that when we ask our brothers and sisters, most of them participate. It comes down to educating our fellow members on the LCPF and how it is used to increase our influence and ensure that letter carrier priorities are addressed with urgency.

While we have been successful with only 10 percent of members contributing to LCPF, I think of all that would be possible if that percentage increased even slightly. In the 2022 election cycle, the top labor PAC brought in \$90 million—yes, you read that right—\$90 million, compared to our \$6.8 million. If we could get even close to that larger number, regenerate the funds of LCPF, and continue to support and build our relationships on both sides of the aisle, NALC would have an even louder and even more impactful voice in Washington.

We all know the old saying, "If you're not at the table, then you're on the menu." It takes all of us contributing to LCPF to stay off that menu and at the table. I call on everyone reading this article to help. Every branch should make a short- and long-term plan to increase participation. This is the mission of our legislative and political organizers (LPOs). You will hear and see them at your upcoming state conventions providing more information about LCPF. Likewise, you will hear and see me and the other members of the Executive Council talking about this too, because growing the LCPF translates to security for letter carrier jobs and health and retirement benefits.

This time next year, I hope to proudly report that our 10 percent LCPF participation has become 20, 30 or even 40 percent. That's dependent on all of us, so let's commit to doing this together.

Note: By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers or of employment by the Postal Service, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. The Letter Carrier Political Fund will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until canceled. Contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political Fund from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administrative staff or their families. Any contribution received from such an individual will be refunded to that contributor. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 per calendar year. Any guideline amount is merely a suggestion, and an individual is free to contribute more or less than the guideline suggests and the union will not favor or disadvantage anyone by reason of the amount of their contribution or their decision not to contribute.

Have questions or need additional resources? Contact your LPO.

- **John Beaumont**
Regions 1, 2 and 4 (AZ, CO, WY)
beaumont@nalc.org
- **Matt Tanner**
Regions 3, 4 (AR, OK), 6 and 8
tanner@nalc.org
- **Anthony Mitchell**
Regions 5, 7 and 10
mitchell@nalc.org
- **Eileen Ford**
Regions 9 and 13
eford@nalc.org
- **Marc Ashmon**
Regions 11, 12, 14 and 15
ashmon@nalc.org