



NALC responds to OMB proposal to privatize USPS

NALC President Fredric Rolando criticized the Trump administration's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) proposal to privatize the United States Postal Service, which was released on June 21, as part of an overall plan to radically reorganize the federal government. His statement read:

"This report takes direct aim at numerous agencies including USPS under the guise of reforming and restructuring for the 21st century," President Rolando said. "The White House is making very clear that privatization of the Postal Service is its goal, despite the fact that the stakeholder meetings with the White House Postal Task Force are ongoing.

"NALC has long been committed to working with all of the stakeholders and not one has floated the idea of privatization except private shippers, who would love nothing more than to see the Postal Service dismantled.

"NALC had high hopes in engaging with this administration and its Postal Task Force to address the underlying issues facing the Postal Service, which stem from the 2006 mandate to pre-fund future retiree health benefits. The NALC, along with the other postal employee unions, provided recommendations to the Task Force. We were hopeful that this administration was seeking real solutions to stabilize this agency with an 88 percent public approval rating where veterans make up almost 25 percent of its workforce.

"Now that we know that this administration and its Task Force will make recommendations on reforms to achieve OMB's privatization goals, NALC will work tirelessly with other stakeholders and Congress to oppose this faulty privatization plan every step of the way to preserve this public institution, which is based in the Constitution."

The full report, which is titled, "Delivering Government Solutions in the 21st Century," calls for massive changes in the organization of virtually every agency in the federal government. Of special note to letter carriers is the plan to merge the departments of Labor and Education into a new Department of Education and the Workforce (DEW), a move that would place our workers compensation program the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and other agencies that enforce labor market standards into a new Enforcement division of the DEW. Leaving aside the dubious logic of having a single agency deal with everything from K-12 education to workplace safety and labor market regulation, the real impact would depend on funding levels and other crucial matters.

The report also calls for breaking up the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), shifting the agency's policy-making activities on federal employment regulations to the Executive Office of the President (EOP) in the White House and sending the administration of our retirement and health benefit programs to the General Services Administration, an agency that now manages federal real estate and government-wide procurement contracts. Given that the Trump administration's budgets have called for huge cuts in federal pension and health benefits, the proposed reorganization of OPM should be seen as a direct threat to letter carrier benefits.

NALC submits postal workforce recommendations to White House

In a meeting with the White House on June 5, NALC President Fredric Rolando delivered policy recommendations to the White House Task Force on the U.S. Postal Service. The task force, composed of the leaders of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Department of the Treasury, was established in April by an executive order from President Donald Trump. It has been charged with evaluating the finances of USPS—including its pricing, operations and workforce costs.

The task force is required to provide, in a report due no later than Aug. 10, 2018, a "thorough evaluation of the operations and finance of the USPS," along with possible legislative and administrative actions to reform the agency. In the executive order, the White House committed to considering the views of the USPS workforce and industry, and NALC was invited to meet with the task force.

NALC coordinated with the other three postal unions—the American Postal Workers Union (APWU), the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association (NRLCA) and the National Postal Mail Handlers Union (NPMHU)—to prepare a comprehensive analysis of the Postal Service's current situation and to offer concrete recommendations ("white paper") that can be taken to stabilize USPS, a treasured agency based in the Constitution.

The materials provided and the workforce recommendations can be found on nalc.org/white-paper.

The four postal unions collectively represent more than 500,000 Postal Service employees who are a critical part of the \$1.4 trillion mailing industry, which employs 7.5 million Americans.

At the meeting, NALC made it clear that the Postal Service, an agency with an 88 percent favorability rating with the public, does not need a new business model or a fundamental restructuring. Instead, Rolando called on the task force to focus on the real source of the Postal Service's financial crisis: the 2006 mandate to pre-fund retiree health benefits decades in advance, which accounts for 92 percent of the agency's reported losses since the mandate went into effect in 2007.

During the meeting, the representatives of Treasury, OPM and OMB engaged Rolando and his team about the materials provided by the four unions, asking questions and making comments on the proposals offered in the white paper.

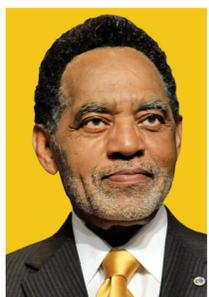
"NALC's goal is to protect the interests of all its members, active and retired alike," Rolando said. "We appreciate the opportunity to engage with the White House to find real solutions to the financial crisis caused by the 2006 mandate to pre-fund retiree health benefits. Our shared goals should be to restore USPS to financial stability while protecting its employees and strengthening the universal mail delivery network that is so critical to Americans and their businesses, large and small. NALC looks forward to working with the postal task force in the weeks and months ahead."

Detroit Convention—Shuttle buses

NALC will provide shuttle bus service to and from the Cobo Center. Shuttle service will include hotels in the NALC block that are not listed as walkable, including those in Dearborn and Southfield. A detailed schedule will be available on nalc.org/convention by the end of June. The list of walkable hotels is below.

Walkable Hotels

- Courtyard Marriott Detroit Downtown
- DoubleTree Suites Hilton Downtown
- Detroit Foundation Hotel
- Holiday Inn Express Detroit Downtown
- Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center
- Westin Book Cadillac



Former APWU President William Burrus has died

William Burrus, a postal clerk who rose to be president of the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) from 2001 to 2010, died on May 19. He was 81. He was the first African American directly elected president of a major national union, the APWU said.

His career began in Cleveland in 1958 when he became a distribution clerk. He participated in the 1970 postal strike and soon after became president of the Cleveland local.

He served as APWU President Moe Biller's executive vice president for 21 years and was involved in every contract negotiation held between the union and USPS from 1980 until 2006. He had a reputation as a skilled negotiator and powerful advocate for postal workers, a union representative said.

During his time as APWU president, he served as a vice president of the AFL-CIO and was listed as one of the 100 most influential black Americans by *Ebony* magazine.

Food Drive nets 71 million pounds; reports still coming in

Letter carriers across the country gave hope to the hungry through the 26th annual Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger® Food Drive on Saturday, May 12.

"Letter carriers see the needs of their communities as they deliver the mail at least six days a week," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "Food Drive Day is the very special day when we have the privilege of bringing food to the tables of the families that depend on our efforts."

Thanks to the generosity of millions of postal customers who donated food at their doorsteps, letter carriers collected more than 71 million pounds of food this year and delivered the donations to food banks, pantries and shelters, providing a lifeline of nutrition for the needy. While results were still coming in as this *Bulletin* went to press, the results confirm that this is the 10th year the food drive has collected more than 70 million pounds. This year's collection brings the total amount

of food collected for hungry families nationwide in the 26 years of the Letter Carriers' Food Drive to more than 1.6 billion pounds.

Bad weather in many parts of the country did not deter letter carriers from picking up tens of millions of pounds of food left near mailboxes as they delivered the mail. Thanks to their dedication, food pantries in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands received critical replenishments of their food stocks.

Los Angeles, CA Branch 24 again topped the list of branch food collection totals by bringing in more than 2 million pounds. The leading branches among different branch size groups, and results reported from every branch, are listed in the July issue of *The Postal Record*.

Nationwide, the food drive effort came together with the sustained energy of letter carriers and their families. President Rolando congratulated them for their success and thanked the NALC's national partners in this year's drive—the U.S. Postal Service, the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW), the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association (NRLCA), AFL-CIO, Valpak Direct Marketing Systems, United Way Worldwide and Valassis. Thousands of local community organizations and volunteers helped to sort food and bring it to local food banks in each town.



Caldwell, ID Branch 1386



Senate committee advances two Board of Governors nominees

The Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee (HSGAC) held a business meeting on May 7 and voted to advance the nominations of David Williams and Robert Duncan to the U.S. Postal Service's Board of Governors. Their nominations proceeded to the Senate floor, where they may be considered in the coming weeks.

While such nominations often are adopted by unanimous consent, it has been reported that Williams's nomination has been put on hold by an individual senator. In the Senate, a hold is a parliamentary procedure that allows one or more senators to prevent a motion from reaching a vote on the Senate floor.

Williams, nominated to serve a term expiring on Dec. 8, 2019, has a long history of government service, most recently as the Inspector General (IG) at the Postal Service from 2003 until his retirement in 2016.

Robert M. (Mike) Duncan, nominated to serve a term expiring on Dec. 8, 2025, is a banker and currently chairman and CEO of Inez Deposit Bank, as well as chairman of the President's Commission on White House Fellows. He served on the board of the Tennessee Valley Authority, and was chairman of the Republican National Committee from 2007 to 2009.

The USPS Board of Governors consists of a nine-member panel in addition to the postmaster general and deputy postmaster general, and is comparable to a board of directors for a publicly held corporation. The board has not been fully staffed since 2010; it has lacked a quorum since 2014 and it lost its final appointed governor in December 2016, leaving all nine positions vacant.

Of note, Calvin Tucker, the third nominee to the Board of Governors, was not included in the business meeting. It is unclear if his nomination will be advanced or removed entirely.

While two additions to the board would be a welcome start, more are necessary to achieve a quorum. There is currently no word on additional nominees for the remaining vacancies. NALC will continue to work with the Senate and the Trump administration to ensure that letter carriers' interests are represented.

PMG explains rates to president



Postmaster General Megan Brennan

On May 18, *The Washington Post* reported that President Donald Trump had met with Postmaster General Megan Brennan and urged her to increase the cost of parcel shipping for Amazon and similar companies, as much as double the rates they currently pay.

Trump has argued on Twitter that the Postal Service is undercharging Amazon to the tune of \$1.50 per package. According to the report, Brennan explained the beneficial arrangements between USPS and Amazon and that these contracts must be reviewed by a regulatory commission.

The \$1.50 argument has been widely reported, though it has been shown to be based on flawed analysis (see the June issue of *The Postal Record*).

White House issues executive orders on federal employees

On May 25, the president signed three executive orders that rolled back long-held civil service protections for federal employees: putting restrictions on official time, cracking down on unions in contract negotiations, and moving aggressively to fire employees with records of misconduct or poor performance.

While the administration has argued that these changes could save taxpayers millions of dollars, unions representing federal employees have said that they would hurt federal employees and infringe on legal protections. The American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) filed a lawsuit at the end of May to block the official time executive order.

NALC requested a legal analysis from its outside attorneys. That analysis concluded that the three executive orders do not apply to the Postal Service or its unions, a conclusion that was confirmed in writing by officials of OPM.

NALC President Fredric Rolando issued the following statement on the executive orders:

"These executive orders are an outrageous attack on America's civil servants, the everyday heroes who make sure that our airlines and foods are safe, our Social Security checks are distributed, and the air, water and environment we depend on is clean. As my friend and fellow union brother J. David Cox Sr., the president of the American Federation of Government Employees, said: 'This is more than union busting—it is democracy busting. These executive orders are a direct assault on the legal rights and protections that Congress has specifically guaranteed to the 2 million public-sector employees across the country who work for the federal government.' I totally agree. The NALC stands in solidarity with AFGE and all the federal unions and will work with them to reverse these executive orders."

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