

Carriers testify for vote-by-mail in Rhode Island, Maryland

As part of NALC's campaign to encourage mail-in voting in every state in the Union, letter carriers in Rhode Island and Maryland testified recently in support of bills to allow voters to more easily cast votes through the Postal Service.

On March 15, Rhode Island State Association President Bob Falso Jr. told a committee considering S. 392, a bill introduced by state Sen. James E. Doyle II (D-8th) of Pawtucket that would lift restrictions on absentee voting, that the bill would enhance democracy.

"In these tough economic times, we see more and more families struggling to make ends meet. Too many citizens simply cannot sacrifice the money or time it takes to wait in long lines to vote," Falso said. "My organization supports the rights of our citizens to cast a ballot through the convenience and security of the mail."

Pawtucket, RI Branch 55 President Jim Langlois listed for the committee more than a dozen barriers to voting that could be removed by a vote-by-mail law. "It offers potential for the substantial benefits of cost-effectiveness, and the incentives of privacy, convenience and safety that will undoubtedly increase voter participation in Rhode Island," Langlois said, "thereby further validating election results as more surely reflecting the will of the people."

In Maryland, state legislative liaison Larry Carroll of Annapolis Branch 651 and Baltimore Branch 176 President



Pictured are (l-r) Rhode Island Senator Jamie Doyle (the vote-by-mail bill sponsor), Branch 55 President Jim Langlois, Branch 15 President Ingrid Armada, Rhode Island State Association President Bob Falso Jr., and President of the Rhode Island Senate M. Teresa Paiva-Weed.

Mike Smith testified before two committees in support of similar vote-by-mail bills, S.B. 409 and H.B. 787. Though the House passed H.B. 787 by a vote of 99-38, the Senate did not act, so the bill will be carried over to the summer session for consideration. ✉



2011 rap session set for Las Vegas

Save the dates! The 2011 NALC Rap Session is set for Oct. 14-16 in Las Vegas. There will be a welcoming reception on the evening of Oct. 14, a variety of workshops on Oct. 15 and the rap session on the morning of Oct. 16. Note that both the Health Benefit Plan and Mutual Benefit Association seminars, also in Las Vegas, have been scheduled to immediately follow the rap session. Check nalc.org for more details as they become available.

Dispute Resolution Process training

A class of 40 NALC stewards and USPS managers attended Dispute Resolution Process training held at the Bolger Academy in Maryland, March 21-25. These joint training sessions are held as needed to certify replacement and backup Step B Team members. The students spent up 14 hours each day developing their writing, communication, computer research and JCAM application skills and were required to pass a final exam on contract knowledge in order to be certified.

