

THE NEW LETTER CARRIER POLITICAL FUND

BECOME A CONTRIBUTOR AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The NALC's political program began the year with a new name and a renewed effort. The union's political action committee is now called the Letter Carrier Political Fund, and with the name change comes a commitment to expand the political influence of letter carriers.

"Congress has so much power to affect our lives and future because the federal government is our employer," NALC President Fredric Rolando said, "and it regulates our collective-bargaining rights. Congress could, in one vote, make drastic changes to the Postal Service, or labor law, that could bring us instant cuts in pay or benefits, or even put many of us out of work."

From assaults on collective-bargaining rights to cuts in pay and pensions to cutting Saturday service to privatizing the Postal Service, the threats to letter carriers loom large in Congress. "Some extremist members of Congress have some drastic ideas for curbing the rights of workers, cutting Postal Service jobs or privatizing the agency," Rolando said,

"and many of these people are one vote away from making their ideas reality. We can't let that happen."

With all 435 House seats, 34 Senate seats and the White House up for grabs in the November election, the stakes are high. "That's why political activism by letter carriers is absolutely

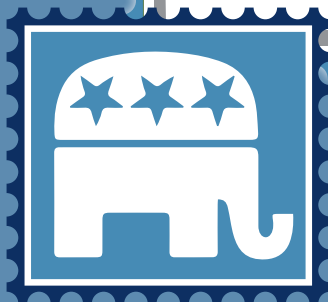
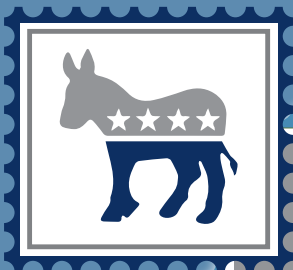
essential," Rolando added. "One of the best ways for us to promote the good and combat the bad in Washington, DC, is to get behind the right candidates."

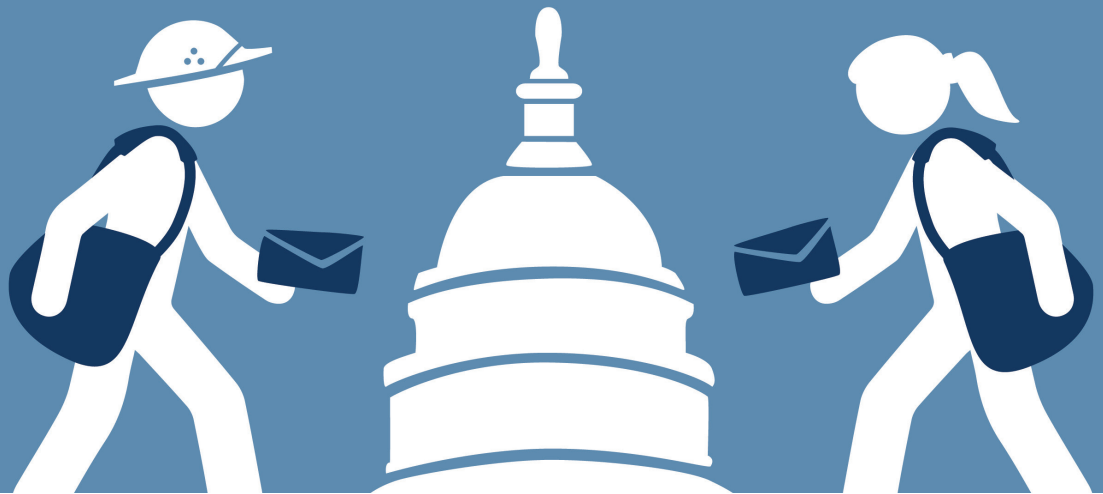
Rebranding the PAC, formerly known as the Committee on Letter Carrier Political education (COLCPE), is part of a larger effort to continue building the union's political influence. Rolando announced the effort to overhaul, simplify and rebrand the union's PAC at the national rap session in Houston last July.

"Just as a shop steward guides letter carriers on the workroom floor," Rolando said, "our rebranded PAC will help letter carriers navigate the political process as we work to elect candidates who not only understand and value letter carriers, but who also will advocate for us in Congress."

PACs allow unions to pool voluntary contributions from their members to amplify their impact on the political process, since federal law forbids using dues money for that purpose.

Participation among active and retired members in the fund has grown over the years, with a noticeable rise in contributions beginning in 2007—the first full year following the launch of the successful "Gimme 5 for COLCPE" campaign. But there is still a large untapped potential for greater PAC participation, and letter carrier activists across the country are working to boost support for the Letter Carrier Political Fund by making sure that NALC members understand the importance of its work and how to give. (A brochure to inform members





about the Political Fund is inserted into this issue and forms to sign up new members start on page 83).

“A revitalized Political Fund will help NALC better educate, engage and mobilize letter carriers about politics and our legislative agenda,” Rolando said. “We must help letter carriers, including the many new carriers joining the ranks of the NALC, understand how the union participates in politics and why it is so important for everyone to be involved.”

Working to elect members of Congress who support NALC’s priorities is the objective of our government affairs operation. Using voluntary donations from NALC members (by law, only members may give), the Letter Carrier Political Fund helps pro-labor, pro-letter carrier candidates, regardless of political party, get elected so they can go to Washington to support and protect letter carrier jobs. The Political Fund identifies, often with input from local NALC members, candidates for office who support causes important to letter carriers.

The Political Fund backs the election campaigns of these candidates in two important ways.

Our PAC gives direct donations to candidates’ campaigns, helping them pay for campaign costs such as advertisements, phone banks, literature and mailings. In the modern world of TV and online advertising, reaching voters costs a lot of money. The average House district has more than 650,000 constituents, while a Senate candidate may need to reach tens of millions of voters. No candidate can talk to each

voter in person, so competitive candidates must spend money to get their messages heard by voters.

The second way the Letter Carrier Political Fund helps is by allowing NALC to release a number of letter carriers to work with the AFL-CIO to get out the vote for pro-labor candidates. These released carriers reach out directly to voters by making phone calls, knocking on doors to talk with voters and distributing campaign literature door-to-door. The candidates are grateful for the help of letter carriers in the painstaking efforts to reach voters at home, one at a time—after all, letter carriers do that job each day, and our ability to endure long walks and our knowledge of neighborhoods makes us naturals for the job. We also interact well with voters since we are respected in the communities we serve.

In this annual Letter Carrier Political Fund issue of *The Postal Record*, NALC recognizes the letter carriers who go out of their way to support the PAC for the benefit of all carriers. Political Fund supporters, who include both active and retired carriers, donate in three ways.

“The best way to support the Letter Carrier Political Fund is with automatic contributions,” Rolando said. “Once you set it up, you don’t have to think about it again, and the donations are spread out over the year. This gives the PAC a reliable base of support as well.” Active letter carriers can arrange for a small donation to be deducted from their paycheck each pay period by signing

up through PostalEASE. Most donors choose automatic donations. These regular donors provide the bedrock financial support for the Letter Carrier Political Fund by ensuring a steady source of funds it can count on. In addition to automatic payroll deduction, active or retired letter carriers can easily arrange for automatic deductions from a bank account, and retired members can contribute directly from their annuities.

NALC members can also write a check directly to the Letter Carrier Political Fund to make a one-time contribution or to supplement their automatic contributions.

Letter carriers sometimes give to the Political Fund through group donations while participating in fundraising events held by branches, auxiliaries and state associations. Those donations are also listed in this issue.

“Thanks to our PAC contributors, we are building the means to stand up for all letter carriers in Washington, DC,” President Rolando said. “If you are not now a contributor, please consider joining the effort. If you can give just a small amount, we could grow even stronger. The power of a union is strength in numbers.”

Supporting the Letter Carrier Political Fund is one of the best ways to support your career by protecting collective-bargaining rights and a strong Postal Service. “This is an election year, and the stakes have never been higher,” Rolando said. “We all need to do our part to support the Letter Carrier Political Fund.” **PR**