

A new future with the Letter Carrier Political Fund



Fredric V. Rolando

In February of each year, we pause to recognize and thank the thousands of NALC members who contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, our political action committee (formerly known as COLCPE). When you work for an enterprise with a “board of directors” made up of the 535 members of Congress and the president of the United States, engaging in our democracy and in the political process is not optional. Our jobs and standard of living—and the continued viability of the U.S. Postal Service—depend on it.

Working for a public institution means we have always faced political threats and legislative battles—and **we always will**. At a time when billionaires and companies can spend unlimited amounts on politics, our contributions are more important than ever. Our PAC gives us the ability to make campaign contributions to pro-letter carrier friends in Congress and to release NALC activists into the field to turn out the vote for letter carrier-friendly candidates, regardless of party (see article on page 14).

Thanks to the members we celebrate in the pages of *The Postal Record* this month, NALC has laid a solid foundation on which to build for the future, supporting legislative allies and growing political support for letter carriers and the Postal Service in Washington. Without the Letter Carrier Political Fund, we might not have survived the Great Recession as well as we did.

The congressional allies we support in both parties helped us fight off more than a dozen attempts over the past eight years to end Saturday delivery and to deregulate mail delivery in the U.S. They helped us defeat two bills that would have ended door-to-door delivery—and would have crippled our ability to capture the growing market for e-commerce delivery. They helped us rebuff many federal budget measures that would have slashed our pension and health benefits. Most importantly, they are essential to our continuing efforts to achieve sensible postal reform and to defend our collective-bargaining rights.

Some of our members don't contribute for financial reasons, or because they simply don't base their votes or political outlook on workplace issues—and many don't want to support candidates who hold views (on non-postal issues) with which they disagree. This is every member's right. There is a rich diversity of political views within our membership, a diversity that I firmly believe is a political strength, not a weakness—especially if non-PAC-contributing members seek to advance letter carrier issues in other ways.

They can become e-Activists and serve as grassroots lobbyists in support of our issues. They can reach out to their senators and House members—especially those who don't naturally support the Postal Service or postal employees—to educate them about the value of the USPS and the work we do. They can engage their local news media when misinformation about the Postal Service or postal legislation arises. They can help build local coalitions in their communities to support the Postal Service and legislation to ensure its quality and viability. Carriers who don't contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are encouraged to help in these or other ways.

For the majority of our members, who do base their votes or political outlook on workplace issues, and who can afford a few dollars each pay period or month, I encourage you to help build our resources to defend the interests of active and retired letter carriers in Washington.

These days, playing good defense is not enough—we need to play offense, too. We need 60 pro-letter carrier votes in the Senate—Democrats, Republicans and independents—to overcome a filibuster in order to enact sensible postal reform legislation. We need 250 reliable pro-postal votes of all political stripes in the House of Representatives to give the Postal Service the freedom to innovate and diversify its services to meet the evolving needs of the country and its businesses.

Thanks again to all the contributors celebrated in this issue of *The Postal Record*—you are making it possible for us to play both offense and defense in Washington. I urge all of you to take some time this month to educate at least one other member about the political challenges we face and how contributing just a few dollars each pay period or each month can make the difference.

Our PAC has a new name—let's use it to renew our future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fredric V. Rolando', written in a cursive style.