

Letter carriers tell Phoenix: ‘Enough is enough!’ on crime

“We’re all here today because our members—letter carriers—are under attack by violent criminals who have no regard for their health and safety,” NALC President Brian L. Renfro told a crowd in Phoenix, AZ, on Nov. 30. It was the latest “Enough is enough” rally held by branches across the country.

The Phoenix area has witnessed at least 10 crimes against letter carriers, often robberies of mail and Arrow Keys, over the past two years, a large increase from the past. It’s an increase seen throughout the country.

“We’re here because this violence should come with an increase in protection, awareness and community. But instead, as is often the case, it feels like we only have one another,” Renfro said.

“Nearly every day, I learn of one of my members—letter carriers—being victim to some sort of violence,” Renfro said. “Targeted armed robberies, assaults, shootings—and yes, even murder—has now become part of our job. This should not be.”

Renfro said more than 2,000 violent attacks had been inflicted on letter carriers across the country since 2020, with the majority involving a gun or other type of weapon. Renfro said, of those, only 14 percent have led to an arrest and prosecution. The prosecutions that have occurred have often been at the local level, where penalties are not as severe as those available to federal prosecutors.

It takes a joint investigation among the Postal Inspection Service, the U.S. attorney general’s office and a local police force to hand the case to federal prosecutors. That, combined with the low number of such cases being



NALC President Brian L. Renfro leads the rally in Phoenix.

prosecuted in the first place, reduces the deterrence to potential lawbreakers who aim to attack letter carriers.

“No carrier ever expects to wake up in the morning, put on that uniform, go to work, deliver the mail to our customers and not come home safe,” Region 4 National Business Agent Dan Versluis told the crowd, which as in other rallies included a contingent of journalists, meaning that the public also heard or read the message delivered by national, regional and local NALC leaders.

“We need our federal prosecutors to prosecute,” Branch 576 President **Cynthia Staley** said. “We need people to know that if you rob a letter carrier, you will be prosecuted and you will go to jail. Enough is enough.”

“Every employer has a duty and obligation to protect its employees on the job,” Renfro noted. “The Postal Inspection Service is not protecting us, and the U.S. Department of Justice is not doing its job prosecuting these crimes.

“Postal inspectors and postal police officers work diligently to investigate and prevent instances of violence

against our employees,” he said, adding, “and yet, current methods of prevention clearly are not working. The situation is worsening.”

Renfro called on the Inspection Service’s leaders to do more: “Times have drastically changed, and methods for protecting our members while we do our job must reflect the current circumstances.”

President Renfro said that in addition to more frequent and stronger prosecutions, NALC also would like to see newer technological versions of the Arrow Keys that criminals often are after.

“A big part of the solution is to devalue that key, potentially using a technology solution so that if they did get their hands on it, it wouldn’t be nearly as valuable and wouldn’t give them the access that they currently have,” he said.

He said that NALC is working with members of Congress on legislation to help speed up the improvements. He vowed that NALC would make such legislation NALC’s top priority in Congress. (For more on what NALC wants to see in such legislation, see Renfro’s President’s Message on page 1.)



The rallies are part of NALC’s effort to get out a multifaceted message—to the Postal Service to better protect letter carriers on their routes; to locally based federal prosecutors to take these cases and apply the harsh federal penalties that local prosecutors do not have available; to residents to alert authorities if they see anything worrisome and to preserve evidence, such as doorbell or other surveillance videos, for use by investigators; and to their elected representatives to be aware of the need for solutions.

Another way NALC is getting the message out is through reports by local and regional TV broadcasts, radio shows, newspapers and online news outlets

about the surge in violence nationwide. Having the letter carrier perspective as a central element in these media reports increases community awareness of the issue and helps strengthen NALC’s push for solutions. That is especially so because of the widespread public support for letter carriers, who in poll after poll have for years topped the list of the most trusted and highly regarded federal employees.

President Renfroe called on local branches to hold rallies such as the ones that have already been held. Branch leaders are encouraged to contact their national business agents’ offices for information and material to help organize a rally or for help



contacting the media to amplify our message to their communities.

“Events like these make a difference and bring awareness to this growing problem,” he said. “I encourage all NALC branches, especially in areas that are experiencing an uptick in crime, to mobilize and plan similar events. When we all come out with a unified message, we are heard.” **PR**

Last chance to give through CFC

The open enrollment period for the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) ends this month, on Jan.

15, so if you’ve been waiting, now’s the time to make your contribution. CFC is the world’s largest and most successful annual workplace charity campaign, raising tens of millions of dollars each year. Since its inception in 1961, the CFC has raised nearly \$8.7 billion for charities and people in need. Federal and postal employees participate in the CFC by choosing from a list of charities to support through automatic deductions from their paychecks.

“Letter carriers are the most generous people I know, giving of themselves to help those in the communities we serve,” NALC President Brian L. Renfroe said. “And there’s no easier way to help than by pledging to give a little each pay period to the charities you support.”

All active letter carriers can participate in the CFC through payroll

deduction. Participants may use payroll deduction, credit or debit cards, or bank accounts to make recurring donations. They also can make a one-time donation using any of these methods except payroll deduction. Participants can even volunteer for the charity and count the value of the hours as money raised.

The easiest ways to sign up are through the CFC Donor Pledging System at cfcgiving.opm.gov or through the CFC Giving smartphone app, available on the App Store and Google Play. Retired letter carriers may donate through a deduction from the annuity, by making a one-time or recurring donation using a credit or debit card, or through an automatic deduction from their bank account using the CFC Donor Pledging System.

Letter carriers can choose from among 2,000-plus nonprofit charitable organizations to support through CFC.

By looking at the list and choosing a charity’s CFC number, you can donate directly to one or more charities. You can search for charities at cfcgiving.opm.gov/offerings.

One charity that many carriers choose to support through CFC is the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA), NALC’s official charity since 1952. MDA is the world’s leading nonprofit health organization sponsoring research into the causes of, and effective treatments for, neuromuscular diseases. MDA research grants support research projects worldwide, as well as camps and activities for children who have any of these diseases. MDA’s CFC number is 10561.

“This is your last opportunity to make a difference through CFC,” Renfroe said. “Make your pledge by Jan. 15.”

For more information, go to nalc.org/cfc. **PR**