

Protecting the union



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In my June *Postal Record* article, I wrote about the importance of organizing letter carriers and how there is strength in numbers. However, at the time, I had no idea of what attacks were coming just around the corner. As I write this article, we know the USPS Board of Governors has selected David Steiner as the new postmaster general (PMG) to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of PMG DeJoy, the White House has released its fiscal year 2026 budget, and the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (H.R. 1) is making its way through Congress as it passed in the House in late May. Each of these developments poses

significant threats to letter carriers and to postal employees as a whole.

Incoming PMG Steiner served as the CEO of Waste Management, Inc. During his tenure, he employed union-busting tactics, slashed jobs and replaced workers with machines, while publicly boasting about shrinking the union footprint. If that isn't bad enough, Steiner also served on the board of directors of FedEx, a major competitor of the Postal Service.

The recently released FY2026 budget calls for the elimination of "official time," or "steward time" as we know it in the Postal Service. The provision providing for the payment of steward activity by the Postal Service has long been a negotiated part of the collective-bargaining agreement (CBA) between the NALC and USPS. The repetitive violations and blatant refusal on the part of postal management to abide by the terms of the CBA underscores the need for steward time. As with all negotiated provisions, one must forego certain things to achieve others. Letter carriers paid for this benefit through the collective-bargaining process. To have outside influences invade our CBA and strip it from us would be unconscionable.

The One Big Beautiful Bill Act (H.R. 1) that narrowly passed in the House included attacks aimed directly at letter carriers. While NALC activism proved successful in eliminating two of the three harmful provisions, the threat of elimination of the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) Special Annuity Supplement did make it into the bill passed by the House. Should this provision pass the full Congress and be signed into law by the president, it would have a drastic effect on the age at which letter carriers could afford to retire.

While these are some of the most recent threats to letter carriers, they are not the only attacks we face. These developments emphasize the need to organize letter carriers to further build on our strength in numbers. There is no question about the positive effects that grassroots efforts, hard work and the activism of NALC officers, staff and our members have had on Capitol Hill in stabilizing the Postal Service and gaining well-deserved benefits for letter carriers. There are many examples of these achievements. However, we must never allow ourselves to become complacent and rest on our laurels.

Additionally, it is imperative that NALC have a robust war chest to fund our legislative agenda and fend off attacks from those who would destroy the future of USPS and its employees. The Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) is the NALC's war chest. NALC is a powerful union with more than 90 percent of all letter carriers voluntarily being members. Conversely, fewer than 10 percent of our members contribute to the LCPF. You, our members, have a long tradition of refusing to stand on the sidelines, but rather of taking the fight to those empowered to make change and demanding what is rightfully yours. To that end, NALC must win favor with politicians and provoke their interest to achieve positive legislative outcomes.

So, it really comes down to the stronger our PAC, the louder our voice on Capitol Hill, and the more we can get done to benefit letter carriers. So, please, make your voice loud by contributing to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. For more information or to sign to become a contributor, please go to the Letter Carrier Political Fund web page at nalc.org/government-affairs/political-activity/yes-i-want-to-become-a-pac-member or contact the Department of Legislative and Political Affairs at NALC Headquarters at 202-662-2833.

By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers or of employment by the Postal Service, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. Any guideline amounts are merely suggestions, and you may contribute more or less than the guidelines suggest and the union will not favor or disadvantage you by reason of the amount of your contribution or your decision not to contribute. The Letter Carrier Political Fund will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until canceled. Contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political Fund from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administrative staff or their families. Any contribution received from such an individual will be refunded to that contributor. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, name of employer and occupation of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 in a calendar year.