

# Looking back and looking forward



**Brian L. Renfroe**

**H**appy New Year, brothers and sisters! The start of 2026 officially ends one of the most challenging and action-packed years in our union's history. The cover story of this magazine (starting on page 8) looks back on all that unfolded in 2025. As you read the article, you'll notice one through line in everything we faced last year: Our solidarity kept us strong and it is how we prevailed.

By staying engaged, on message and united, everything we fought off and accomplished together last year was remarkable. While we reflect on everything that came

our way in 2025, we can't lose focus or let up. While we don't know exactly how the year ahead will unfold, we do know we have some major fights coming. As always, facing them together is how we'll succeed.

**One of our biggest fights yet will officially kick off next month when we open negotiations with the Postal Service for our next collective-bargaining agreement.** We are fortunate to be entering this round of negotiations with more member feedback than ever before. From the first-ever Rank-and-File Bargaining Committees, to the ideas and suggestions from branch and state leaders at the national rap session last November, to an upcoming all-active member survey, the Executive Council and its bargaining subcommittees continue to use members' ideas as they finalize their bargaining proposals.

Having access to this variety of information has been invaluable as we finish up our months- and years-long collective-bargaining preparation. As we enter the next step of the process, with negotiations opening next month, letter carriers will continue to receive updates so that you can stay as engaged as you all have been during the preparation phase.

**While contract negotiations are the nearest fight on the horizon, we must stay vigilant in other areas and cannot ignore lingering threats.** Last year, millions of our fellow federal employees' collective-bargaining rights were decimated. There's no question that unions, especially federal unions, have been under attack. While we're grateful

that we've fought off any real threats thus far, we must be prepared to combat any potential proposals from Capitol Hill, the White House or anywhere else that threaten our very right to exist as a union.

Similarly, while threats to the Postal Service haven't surfaced in recent months, we know there are some in power with an appetite to restructure, privatize or fundamentally change the agency. After last year, we have a playbook in place and are ready to push harder than ever before to fight anyone who tries to threaten our jobs or retirement security.

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**"We've accomplished a lot together, and there is much to be proud of, but the fights are far from over. I urge every member to join me in committing to keep fighting like hell for letter carriers in 2026."**

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Fighting for the future of the Postal Service is always central. In our daily (or hourly) struggles with management, it may seem counterintuitive, but without our employer, we have no jobs, no retirements and no union. We know that the agency's long-term sustainability can and should be improved. That's why we must keep fighting for a fair reallocation of the Postal Service's Civil Service Retirement System pension obligations and for the agency's ability to invest its health care retirement funds in a more fiscally responsible manner. These changes require action from Congress or the administration. While they aren't simple or easy fixes, it's important that we keep fighting for a healthier future of the Postal Service.

**I am sincerely grateful to every member for all you do to make our union stronger every day.** An active union is a strong union. The engagement and activism of our membership is unmatched. That's what sets us apart and keeps us strong. We've accomplished a lot together, and there is much to be proud of, but the fights are far from over. I urge every member to join me in committing to keep fighting like hell for letter carriers in 2026.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian L. Renfroe".