

News from Washington

Supreme Court blocks administration from restricting mail-in ballots



The Supreme Court (below) rejected an executive order that could have restricted many mail-in ballots (above) from flowing through the mail stream.

On Sept. 14, the Supreme Court rejected President Donald Trump's executive order (EO) to limit mail-in ballots nationwide. The decision follows an intense legal battle that culminated in a ruling by the highest court.

"NALC applauds the Supreme Court for upholding the Constitution and guaranteeing Americans' access to voting by mail," NALC President Brian L. Renfroe said. "This ruling dealt with an executive order that was a clear effort to diminish the credibility of mail-in voting, sow doubt in our elections, and discredit the work of our union's 200,000 active letter carriers."

"Voting by mail has been a safe, secure and reliable way to participate in our democracy since the Civil War. As we always have, letter carriers are prepared and proud to get the job done once again in this year's mid-term elections."

The Supreme Court's decision blocked the EO the president had issued in March. The EO aimed to severely limit mail-in ballots by giving the Postal Service new responsibilities outside its typical, constitutionally mandated operations. The order granted USPS the authority to reject and refuse delivery of ballots unless states complied with a uniform envelope style and submitted lists of eligible voters to an online portal that had yet to be released.

These measures were challenged in the courts, and a U.S. district judge in Boston, MA, issued a temporary order blocking implementation until after November. However, on Aug. 24, the Supreme Court overturned that order and allowed the Postal Service to proceed with planning. While the Court did not rule on the legality of the changes at the time, it stated that the lawsuit was premature, given that the Postal Service had yet to issue a rule on how it would implement the EO. The Postal Service released its implementation rule a day before the Supreme Court's ruling.

Meanwhile, earlier this month, a Postal Service whistleblower said the new online portal that USPS was building in compliance with the EO was dysfunctional and not ready for the midterm elections.

Ahead of the ruling, on Sept. 10, an appeals court upheld the block on the EO, and on Sept. 13, a U.S. district judge in Washington, DC, issued a similar block.

Days before the ruling, a bipartisan group of current and former lawmakers filed an amicus brief in the Supreme Court case, urging it to uphold the lower court's block.



President Trump urged the Supreme Court to rule on the case, while the Democratic states and voting rights groups challenging the plan argued it would be nearly impossible for states to comply with new Postal Service rules weeks before the midterm elections.

The ruling eliminated any proposed changes included in the EO and confirmed that the Postal Service and letter carriers' roles will remain the same in the midterm elections.

Senate confirms next secretary of labor

On Sept. 30, in a party-line 47-41 vote, the Senate confirmed Keith Sonderling as the next secretary of the Department of Labor (DOL). Sonderling has served as acting secretary since former Secretary Lori Chavez-DeRemer left the agency in April. President Trump officially nominated Sonderling for the position in June.

Sonderling is an attorney who has served in several government positions. Before becoming acting secretary, Sonderling was confirmed as deputy secretary of labor in March 2025, overseeing the department's operations, strategic planning, budget and more. From 2020 to 2024, he served as a commissioner of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, serving as vice chair of the commission from 2020 to 2021. Before that, from 2017 to 2020, he served as acting administrator and deputy administrator of the Wage and Hour Division at the DOL.

The DOL plays a key role in advancing economic opportunities and is crucial to ensuring the safety and well-being of letter carriers and all workers.

"As Secretary Sonderling officially takes on this critical role, NALC urges

him to focus on workers by acting on some of NALC's top priorities with the agency," NALC President Brian L. Renfro said. "Resuming the rulemaking process for a national heat safety standard and improving the services administered through the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, which letter carriers injured on the job rely on, are essential for letter carriers' safety."

NALC files comments on SEC proposed e-delivery regulation

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has proposed a rule that would make electronic delivery the default method for certain financial information under federal securities laws. Currently, this information is required to be delivered to recipients by mail unless they select electronic delivery. NALC opposes implementation of this rule and submitted comments to the commission.

NALC's comments emphasized that the proposed rule would threaten letter carriers' jobs, the Postal Service's financial stability, and the agency's ability to provide universal service. If enacted, the proposed rule could result in a nearly 9 percent reduction of USPS First-Class Mail. This significant loss in volume and revenue would drastically impact USPS's ability to provide high-quality service, noticeably affect the agency's finances, and in turn, threaten letter carriers' jobs. Additionally, the proposed rule would impede the public's access to important financial information while opening the door to unnecessary security risks.

Visit the "Government Affairs" section of nalc.org to read NALC's full comments. **PR**



Keith Sonderling