



Minnesota State Association of Letter Carriers

The Minnesota Letter Carrier

2nd Qtr 2026

Hello everyone! By the time you read this, Easter will have passed. I hope it was an enjoyable and meaningful holiday for all of you. I also hope everyone continues to stay safe while carrying out your work each day.

March 28 has now come and gone, and it truly felt like democracy at its best. It was a powerful example of people coming together to express their thoughts and feelings openly. The focus and unity on display showed clearly where people stand, and it was incredibly well done.

As this is published, we will also have just wrapped up another round of the Business Agent's regional training classes. It was great to see so many of you there (just having a little fun looking into the crystal ball!).

Looking ahead, we have several important events coming up: the DFL Convention in May in Rochester, the National Convention in August, the AFL-CIO event in September, and the Minnesota State Convention in October. I hope to reconnect with many friends at these gatherings throughout the year.

As of today, I have had conversations with the Lieutenant Governor, two members of Congress, and another individual currently running for Congress. They all express support and are interested in understanding our role as Letter Carriers. Of course, they also ask for help in the form of contributions, but that is part of the process.

In closing, I hope everyone continues to stay strong and, most importantly, stays healthy.

Perry B Schmidt



Perry Schmidt
President

Take Action at nalc.org

Anti-Privatization Resolution (H.Res. 70/S.Res 147)

Cosponsors: 233

Democrats: 210

Republicans: 23

Protect Our Letter Carriers Act (H.R.1065/S.463)

Cosponsors: 191

Democrats: 164

Republicans: 27

Federal Retirement Fairness Act (H.R.1522)

Cosponsors: 128

Democrats: 111

Republicans: 17

Equal COLA Act (H.R. 491/S.624)

Cosponsors: 74

Democrats: 72

Republicans: 2

Improving Access to Workers' Compensation for Injured Federal Employees Act (H.R.3170/S. 3296)

Cosponsors: 17

Democrats: 10

Republicans: 7

USPS Shipping Equity Act (H.R.3011)

Cosponsors: 10

Democrats: 9

Republicans: 1

Erin Rode, Vice President

I feel like I never know what to write as the Vice President, so I am going to write about something I know a decent amount about: SELF-CARE.

In our line of work, it is difficult to put ourselves above the job, but yet extremely necessary. If you feel sick and could be contagious, use sick leave to prevent your office from catching the crud. It is certainly going around now, as another COVID variant has been circulating. If you are in a neighborhood with a certain federal group present, be cautious and aware of your surroundings, and protect yourself, your neighbors, and your customers.

Utilize your SDOs to complete household chores and errands, but take some time for yourself, too. Whether that is through some video games or comforting TV shows, it is completely up to you. I prefer to watch one of my shows while I fold laundry. Take a hot shower or a bath. Moisturize afterwards; it is still fairly cold (at least it is in the northern half of the state) and your skin is the largest organ of your body. Utilize your Flexible Spending Account (FSA) funds for necessities: medication, medical co-pays, over the counter or first-aid items. Compression socks are a wonderful thing. Try to be your best self at home and at work, and try not to make work your whole life.

Lastly, and I am sure a lot of the board will say the same thing, donate to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) if you do not already do so. Congress has a lot to take care of these days, but contributing just \$5 per paycheck or per month can help some of the important postal bills pass.

Bill Wessinger, Director of Retirees

It's About Time!

Yes, it has been a while since my last article, a busy schedule and some procrastination are the culprits. I wanted to remind those who are retired and those thinking about retiring, that your continued membership in the NALC is very important. You continue to have representation at the national level with a Director of Retirees looking out for our benefits and taking our concerns to Congress. You can run for office in the branch, the state and even national if you choose and partake in all branch activities and so much more. Voting on the national contract is about the only activity that you cannot do since you are no longer an active carrier. The best deal of all is your union dues are only \$7 a year unless your branch has an additional amount added to their dues, and this is usually very minimal and is a great deal for all you get.

Remember to file an 1189 upon retiring. This can only be done after you have received your CSA number from OPM, and your branch can help you with making sure it is done right. Also, if you retired and do not file an 1189 immediately, but were in good standing at retirement you can file it later, BUT WHY WAIT? You don't want to miss anything, such as the Postal Record or branch activities and being kept up to date.

Be safe at all times.

Robb Petersburg, Editor

As I write this, there are snowflakes outside and people are getting impatient waiting for warmer weather. Old Man Winter seems to refuse to give it up this year. We can all learn from this persistence.

We must all continue our efforts to support legislation that supports our benefits. We cannot let off the gas, so to speak, on driving these bills home. We are close to getting the necessary support for anti-privatization of the Postal Service, with the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act not far behind. We are continuing to make progress on our other bills, including the Federal Retirement Fairness Act, the Equal COLA Act, the Act improving access to OWCP, and the USPS Shipping Equity Act.

With all the things going on around politics, we cannot let our representatives put our issues on the back burner. We must continue to pressure Washington to pass legislation that protects our benefits as federal employees. Just last year, Congress nearly stripped our retirement benefits when agreeing on a national budget. We have to remind them on a regular basis that federal employee benefits cannot be on the chopping block. We were promised certain retirement entitlements, and we cannot allow the politicians to take those away.

Contacting your representatives is as easy as ever. Just go to the NALC website, under the Government Affairs and Legislative Activities tabs. There, you can “Take Action”, and communication will be sent to your specific representatives with only a few more clicks.

We must continue to be persistent like Old Man Winter. Washington must know that these issues affect us every day, not just during election season or during budget talks. Be persistent, be annoying, and do not let Congress take away our rights.



Shawn Hansen , LCCL 8

This is what is currently happening in the 8th Congressional District and nationwide. First off, President Trump signed an executive order to nearly eliminate mail-in ballots for federal elections. If states do not comply, then federal funding of elections would be withheld. Of course, multiple lawsuits have already been set in motion. A few states only use mail-in ballots for all elections. Here in Minnesota, there are many rural townships without any polling places, so they are strictly mail-in ballots only. There are also many elderly and disabled voters who would be affected by this.

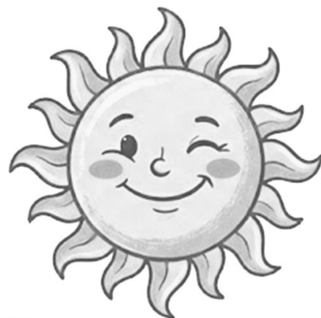
Also nationally, with the rising gas prices, for the first time the Postal Service is adding a fuel surcharge. This is the first time I can recall this happening in my 20 plus years as a letter carrier.

Locally, St. Louis County has stated that some of its five road projects planned this year might not be able to use Local Project Labor Agreements because of federal funding laws from the current administration. Regardless of your party affiliation, all of these are a slap in the face to organized labor from the current administration.

As far as Representative Stauber, since the beginning of the year, he has sponsored legislation to make it easier to mine in nationally protected areas, including the Superior National Forest, and the Watershed of The Boundary Waters. He also co-sponsored legislation making it easier to organize workplaces for union membership. Most of his other votes have been along party lines, including the Save Act that would essentially eliminate mail-in voting.

With everything that is happening in our federal government now, it really shows the need for LCPF and our need to try to increase the number of members who contribute. Our competitors are private and spend whatever they want to influence legislators. The Postal Service is constrained from doing that, and because of the Hatch Act, the NALC cannot use union dues, nor can we solicit for LCPF on the clock or in uniform. Still, the need is here now, and we'll do what we can. It could always be better, but Congress has a lot to do with that.

STAY SAFE IN THE SUMMER HEAT



**DRINK PLENTY
OF WATER**



**WEAR SUNSCREEN
& HAT**



**TAKE BREAKS
IN THE SHADE**



NALC SUMMER SAFETY ADVISORY

Dave Zimney, Executive Board

An Update on Current Postal Legislation: The “Safeguard American Voter Eligibility Act” or the SAVE Act, H.R. 22 has already passed in the House. There are two Senate versions of this bill, S.3752 and S.128. S. 3752 has 48 cosponsors and S.128 has 49 cosponsors. 60 votes are required to pass this legislation. Lucky for us, neither of our Senators have signed onto either of these bills and as it looks now, it is unlikely that either one will get the 60 votes needed to pass. If you did not know, these bills would severely hinder people’s ability to vote by mail which would be harmful to the USPS.

H.Res. 70 currently has 233 cosponsors. This resolution expresses the sense of the House of Representatives that Congress should ensure that the U.S. Postal Service is not privatized and remains an independent establishment of the federal government. Unfortunately, the Senate version, S.Res.147 only has 7 cosponsors, none of which are from Minnesota.

H.R. 1065, the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act, has 191 cosponsors. The Senate version S.463 only has 11 cosponsors and again, none of them are from Minnesota. This is the legislation that takes key steps in protecting letter carriers including harsher sentences for crimes committed against us.

H.R. 1522, the Federal Retirement Fairness Act currently has 128 cosponsors. This is the bill that would allow non-career time (CCA, TE) to count toward our retirement benefits. There is no Senate version of this bill. On the House side, only Angie Craig, Betty McCollum and Ilhan Omar are signed on from Minnesota.

H.R. 3011, the United States Postal Service Shipping Equity Act would allow the Postal Service to ship alcohol. This could add millions of additional revenue to our finances, unfortunately it only has 10 cosponsors and there is no senate version of this bill. Once again, not one congressperson from Minnesota is signed on.

The best way to get these bills passed is to contact your representatives. Do it by mail, phone and email. Each one of us needs to do our part if we are to be successful. Giving to the Letter Carrier Political Fund is the easiest and probably the most effective way for us to influence Congress and accomplish our goals.

Max Olsen, LCCL 3

Representative Kelly Morrison (MN-3) is currently cosponsoring H. Res 70, which currently has 231 cosponsors and expresses opposition to privatizing USPS. Rep. Morrison has not cosponsored H.R. 1065, the Protect our Letter Carriers Act, which currently has 191 cosponsors and aims to reduce targeted attacks against letter carriers by providing funding to update postal locks and increasing enforcement for crimes committed against letter carriers. Rep. Morrison has not cosponsored H.R. 1522, the Federal Retirement Fairness Act, which has 128 cosponsors and would allow carriers to make contributions towards their retirement for time spent in a non-career status.

Rep. Morrison recently attended the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation’s candidate screening forum, where Branch 9 President Joe Rian had the opportunity to ask directly about supporting H.R 1065 and 1522; Morrison expressed interest in supporting H.R 1522 during the event. Both of these bills are the most likely to have a path to adoption during the current or next sessions of congress. If you live in the third district, please continue to contact Rep. Morrison’s office and ask for her support on these bills.

Jonathan Garcia, Executive Board

Greetings, Brothers and Sisters, I am hoping you have all made it through the winter fine and ready for spring weather! I attended my very first rally last month on February 22 with fellow members of Branch 440 Rochester joining Branch 9 NALC's "Fight Like Hell for a Fair Contract" rally in front of the Minneapolis Post Office. We had a great turnout with branches showing up on such a cold and windy day as we do while we carry our routes. It was a brutal day, but we came together for those few hours to fight for what we letter carriers deserve. We let our demands be known that day, known to the Post Office and the public. We carried signs and shouted out our demands for higher wages, an all-career workforce and comprehensive contract compliance. It felt good as cars slowed as they were driving by to honk and give their thumbs up in support or slow down and yell out that they support us. It does not take much time and effort but if we all do our part, we can make sure to get our voices heard. As negotiations have officially opened, please stay engaged in our cause and 'Fight Like Hell'!!!

Eduardo Silva, Executive Board; LCCL 6

Greetings, Brothers and Sisters. It is hard not to have negative thoughts during these challenging times. Our country is at war, and this administration demonstrates daily that common sense, diplomacy, respect, and solidarity have become relics of the past. The level of intolerance and ignorance is alarmingly high, with differing viewpoints often seen as platforms for argument. Unfortunately, both sides fail to listen to each other, creating a toxic environment where no solutions are found. We are living in what feels like a "King's Era," where you either obey or face some form of punishment.

The situation is no different at the Post Office. Many letter carriers have been facing ongoing issues, including a lack of support, excessive working hours, and pressure on new employees to perform accurately and quickly without receiving the help they need. Intimidation and inadequate workplace safety measures are other significant concerns that some district managers continue to ignore. The focus seems to be solely on "protecting the parcels," ensuring every barcode is scanned, and every package is delivered, all while giving the illusion that our customers are well taken care of.

In reality, first-class mail is being treated as second-class. Many routes go without mail delivery for up to three days, and employees are afraid to speak up, knowing their concerns will not be heard. The mentality of this "King's Era" has unfortunately spread far and wide, and we must fight back to restore order. Our union must remain strong and resilient. As letter carriers, we need to support one another and stand united against the unreasonable decisions imposed by authoritarian managers.

As Americans, we have a responsibility to vote in November and reclaim our beautiful country from the grip of this nonsensical authoritarian leadership.

MSALC MDA

As one of our MSALC MDA coordinators, we are working to spread the word to ALL Branches that we are currently seeking donations to help strengthen both the raffle tables and to the live auction at this fall's state convention.

- We are looking forward to seeing all the basket donations from each Branch!
- MDA Golf Hole Sponsor is \$100
- MDA Best Ball Golf Tournament (Congratulations to last year's winners of Mary Tinglov, Pat Garhoffer, Joe & Nick Tiemann)
- MDA \$5 Putt Off Competition *putters will be provided, there will be time to practice* No experience needed as our MSALC President Perry Schmidt showed last year as the Winner!
- MDA Cribbage Tournament
- Monday Night Football Board
- Possibly have a Bean Bag Tournament, if we have multiple volunteers to bring their boards & bags to make this possible!

Andrew Hagan, LCCL 5

In the halls of Congress, few voices resonate as consistently for the protection of federal workers as Congresswoman Ilhan Omar. Representing Minnesota's 5th District, Omar has carved out a reputation not just as a progressive firebrand, but as a dedicated advocate for the "silent backbone" of the American economy: the United States Postal Service (USPS) and the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC).

For Omar, the struggle for labor rights is personal, rooted in her commitment to a "worker-first" economy. Her legislative record and recent committee work highlight a clear mission: ensuring that those who deliver for America are themselves protected, respected, and fairly compensated.

As the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Workforce Protections, Omar has been a vocal defender of the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA). During key hearings in 2025 and early 2026, she famously referred to FECA as more than a statute—calling it a "solemn promise" from the government to its workers.

Omar often brings the human element to technical policy debates. In 2025, she shared the harrowing story of a Minnesota letter carrier whose truck was struck by a speeding vehicle, leaving him with life-altering injuries and PTSD. Omar used this story to fight against "efficiency-driven" reforms that would gut benefits. Ensuring that letter carriers—who account for a significant portion of federal workers' compensation claims—have seamless access to medical care and financial stability when tragedy strikes.



Branch 9 representatives met with District 5 House Representative Ilhan Omar

L to r: Hagan, President Rian, Omar, Executive VP Pennock

Workplace safety is not a static issue for Omar; it is a life-or-death priority. With rising global temperatures, the safety of letter carriers—who spend hours on the road in non-air-conditioned vehicles—has become a flashpoint.

Omar has been a staunch supporter of implementing federal heat safety standards. She has consistently pushed the Department of Labor and OSHA to enforce regulations that protect outdoor workers from heat exhaustion and stroke, arguing that such protections are both "morally right and fiscally savvy."

The NALC finds a consistent ally in Omar. She has championed bipartisan efforts such as the Improving Access to Workers' Compensation for Injured Federal Workers Act. This legislation aims to modernize the claims process by allowing nurse practitioners and physician assistants to treat federal workers' compensation claims, reducing the bureaucratic hurdles that often delay recovery for postal employees.

Furthermore, Omar has highlighted the community-hero aspect of the postal service. She famously recognized Tesfaye Deyasso, a letter carrier from her district and NALC "Hero of the Year," who saved a man from a burning vehicle. For Omar, these stories illustrate why the USPS is a vital public good that must be protected from privatization and budget cuts.

Beyond the USPS, Omar's support for unions is foundational to her platform. Her 100% rating from the AFL-CIO in 2025 reflects her voting record on:

- **The PRO Act:** Fighting to remove barriers to union organizing and collective bargaining.
- **Opposing "Midnight Rules":** Resisting efforts to overturn worker protections without public input.
- **Wage Theft Advocacy:** Pushing for the Department of Labor to aggressively investigate and prosecute companies that subvert labor laws.

"Our economy must be reformed to ensure that every American has access to a stable job with a living wage, robust benefits, and the right to organize." — Rep. Ilhan Omar

As the political landscape shifts and the USPS faces ongoing operational challenges, Ilhan Omar remains a steady gatekeeper for labor. By framing postal work not just as a service, but as a career that deserves dignity and

Chey Sauke, LCCL 1

Greetings, fellow carriers. It seems as though by the time you receive this there will be dozens of world events happening from the time I write this. I am going to focus on things you can do to stay informed and get more active politically.

As always, it is encouraged that you visit NALC.org and open the government affairs page. I encourage you to go over the fact sheets of the current bills we are fighting for. Bring it to union meetings, make your loved ones or even customers aware of these issues. If you have the “I don’t do politics” mentality, consider this: politics are going to do you regardless.

Please consider contributing to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF). I know it is not fair that money talks in politics but that is the game we must play. Sadly, we are not contributing as much as our competition. UPS PAC spends about \$1.7 million in candidate contributions and \$8 million in lobbying annually. FedEx PAC spends \$1 million in contributions and \$10 million on lobbying annually. LCPF spends \$1.5 million in contributions and \$650,000 in lobbying annually. Woof, right? If we had all 284,000 active and retiree carriers contribute \$5 a month, we would have \$17 million a year in our political PAC. That amounts to \$1,800 for each of us for a 30-year contribution span. If you ask me that sounds like a sweet deal to protect our retirement, safety, and anything else that could be taken from us at the swipe of a pen. Sacrificing one hot sandwich from Kwik Trip on your break is doable, don’t you agree?

Another action you can take is finding groups in your own community to help people directly. Personally, I have found my local indivisible group where we have focused on food distribution, cash aid, and discussions on safety in our community. I know at times the media and politics create fear and division amongst various groups. If you have contempt for people that are different than you, I implore you to look inwards and ask why. At the very least keep these views to yourself on the workroom floor. You may not know that your fellow carrier is in a targeted demographic or has loved ones that are. At the end of the day, all of our labor has value, and we all deserve to feel safe at our jobs.

Lastly, for District 1 specifically, democratic candidate Jake Johnson has been endorsed by the MN AFL-CIO! The recommendation is based on his steadfast support for working families, and MN trade unionists have also placed their trust in him. This will be sent to Brian Renfroe as he is a national delegate along with other National Union Presidents. As for Finstad? Due to his voting against bills that are detrimental to helping working families, he is not supported by the AFL-CIO.

Do not squander away what our former brothers and sisters fought so hard for us. Get to know our union history and how far we have come and how much we take for granted. Rome wasn’t built in a day, and neither was our union. Stay vigilant, folks.

Connie Beissel Executive Board Chair; AFL-CIO Delegate; LCCL-2

This year is the midterm election year. At the federal level in MN, we will be voting on the 8 Congressional House of Representatives and 1 Senate race in November. There are a couple of open seats this year. CD2 is one and the Senate seat is the other.

The caucuses that were held in February were very well attended. After the caucus is the Senate District endorsing conventions, followed by the Congressional District conventions, then the State convention. Both the DFL and GOP have the same guidelines to address the endorsement of a certain candidate. If any candidate does not abide by the party endorsement, they can still challenge the endorsed candidate in a primary election in August.

At my endorsing convention, I became an alternate delegate to the CD2 convention and the State DFL convention. I did this to help both Angie Craig and Matt Little get their respective endorsements. Angie Craig is running for the open Senate seat vacated by Tina Smith. Matt Little is running for the open seat vacated by Angie Craig.

As some of you know, Matt Little worked for the NALC in the legislative department in D.C. right out of college for several years. Matt knows the struggles letter carriers face. I believe that he will be the best choice for us in the House of Representatives. Angie Craig will be a great advocate for us in the Senate, too. She has been challenging the PMG for years now about the service standards of the USPS.

Our job depends on who is in office- it always has and always will. Do your due diligence by researching the candidates running for office. Your job may depend on it.



Sign up for the Letter Carrier Political Fund!

Help us be proactive on legislation that helps letter carriers along with defending against attacks on us!

Below are the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) disbursements made to members of Congress from April 1, 2025, through March 31, 2026:

The LCPF contributes to members of Congress who support legislation which benefits NALC members and the USPS

Stauber, Pete \$2,500

Note: By contributing 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. 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 cancelled. 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.

THE MINNESOTA LETTER CARRIER

Minnesota State Association of Letter Carriers

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