



Minnesota State Association of Letter Carriers

The Minnesota Letter Carrier

2nd Qtr 2024

Hello, everyone! I hope everyone made it through this spring. It has been sunny one day, and rainy the next.

Well, he was found guilty- yes, Trump. Now, wherever he goes he has 'felon' stamped on his head.

There is so much more to come on July 11th. How the Judge penalizes him is still a mystery. Will he be required to wear an ankle bracelet, clean up trash along the freeways, or go to schools to talk to our kids about right and wrong? There are some that still feel he is innocent and did not do anything wrong, that the twelve members of the jury were not paying attention or were not told the truth. I watched much of the court coverage. I heard him say he was wronged, and that the truth was a lie.

Enough is Enough! Please continue calling your members of congress, it is so important for them to hear from you.

August 5th through the 9th, we will be in Boston for the national convention. I hope everyone who goes has fun and learns a lot. It is well worth the time you spend there. Thanks everyone and I hope to see everyone that is going to Boston. I hope to see the rest of you at Sugar Lake for the state convention. Golfing will be on October 6th and the convention will begin on the 7th. We chose a new location this year. The state convention is a great place to make new friends and memories. I hope everyone has a nice rest of the spring and summer.

Perry B. Schmidt



Perry Schmidt
President

Take Action at nalc.org

Enough is Enough: Protect Our Letter Carriers Act (H.R. 7629/S. 4356)

Cosponsors: 81

Democrats: 66

Republicans: 15

Repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset. Support H.R. 82/S. 597.

Cosponsors: 320

Democrats: 208

Republicans: 112

Support the USPS Shipping Equity Act (H.R. 3721)

Cosponsors: 22

Democrats: 19

Republicans: 3

Support the Federal Retirement Fairness Act (H.R. 5995)

Cosponsors: 107

Democrats: 83

Republicans: 24

Expand care options for injured federal workers. Support H.R. 618/S. 131.

Cosponsors: 50

Democrats: 37

Republicans: 13

Support the continuation of USPS door delivery (H. Res. 376)

Cosponsors: 50

Democrats: 31

Republicans: 19

Christa Abraham, Secretary

This quarter for my article I thought I would give you a quick fact sheet on the NALC Priority Legislation Acts that have been introduced to Congress. While there are many more than just those listed below, these are the issues the NALC find to be high priority.

PROTECT OUR LETTER CARRIERS ACT (H.R.7629/ S.4356) To deter crimes and assaults against letter carriers by securing keys and collection boxes, directing U.S. attorney offices to prioritize cases involving assaults against letter carriers, and strengthening sentencing guidelines for those found guilty of these crimes Introduced by Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), Rep. Greg Landsman (D-OH), Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Sen. Josh Hawley (R-MO)

SOCIAL SECURITY FAIRNESS ACT (H.R.82/S.597) To repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset, provisions that reduce Social Security benefits for individuals who receive other benefits, such as a pension from a state or local government Introduced by Rep. Garrett Graves (R-LA), Rep. Abigail Spanberger (D-VA), Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Susan Collins (R-ME)

FEDERAL RETIREMENT FAIRNESS ACT (H.R.5995) Would allow certain federal employees to make catch-up retirement contributions for time spent as non-career employees after Dec. 31, 1988, making such time creditable service under the Federal Employees Retirement System. This includes letter carriers who served as casuals, transitional employees and city carrier assistants. Introduced by Reps. Derek Kilmer (D-WA), Gerry Connolly (D-VA), David Valadao (R-CA) and Don Bacon (R-NE)

USPS SHIPPING EQUITY ACT (H.R.3721) Would allow the Postal Service to ship beer, wine, and other alcoholic beverages directly from licensed producers and retailers to legal customers Introduced by Reps. Dan Newhouse (R-WA) and Jennifer Wexton (D-VA)

DOOR DELIVERY RESOLUTION (H. RES.376) Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Postal Service should take all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of door delivery for all business and residential customers Introduced by Reps. Dave Joyce (R-OH) and Sanford Bishop (D-GA)

Please reach out to your local Congressional leaders asking for their support on these matters.



Eric Marquardt, Treasurer; LCCL 7

The protect our letter carriers act was introduced in the US Senate on May 16. Democrat Senator Kristen Gillibrand of NY and Republican Senator Josh Hawley of MO introduced the bill. Bill numbers HR.7629/S.4356 would secure \$7 billion in funding for Postal service infrastructure appropriated over five years at \$1.4 billion. These funds will go to more secure collection boxes, other secure electronic items that we will be carrying, and stronger laws to put robbers behind bars.

There have been over 2000 criminal acts committed against letter carriers since 2020. A number of robberies resulted in injury to those carriers according to the postal inspectors. This bill would strengthen sentencing guidelines and ensure that these crimes would be treated in the same manner as an assault on a federal law enforcement officer.

Bill Wessinger, Director of Retirees

Hello MN, I am at the DFL state convention seeing Democracy in action. This is my first time as a delegate at the ripe old age of 78. I can only hope our younger carriers recognize the importance and get involved politically. We cannot complain if we do not participate. We cannot afford to not get involved. We could lose everything we have fought for over the years, including Social Security. This is the year to step up to the plate. This is not the year to bury your head in the sand. Get involved or suffer the fall out. Be safe.

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

Summer is upon us, this is the time of year where mail volumes traditionally drop off. As much as we would like to see the volume of mail and parcels decline, so we are not working crazy hours, we also need to be assured of job security. As Amazon continues to expand their delivery program we could be subject to route additions. So be careful for what you wish for.

Congress is still calling for PMG Dejoy to make changes to the way the USPS has been operating. Congresswoman Angie Craig has been vigilant in holding our PMG responsible for the mail delays. She has signed on to all the Bills that the NALC is pushing. We also need stricter consequences when it comes to our safety on the streets. No carrier should be accosted on the street for the coveted "arrow key". If the criminals don't end up being severely punished for the crimes against us, they will continue to rob us.

I sat in on a screening with the MN AFL-CIO for a few of the congressional candidates. We screened and recommended endorsement of CD2 Representative Angie Craig, CD4 Representative Betty McCollum and CD5 Representative Ilhan Omar. I was unavailable when they screened the CD3 candidates. At this time the MN AFL-CIO has not scheduled dates to screen the remaining congressional candidates.

In solidarity

Dave Zimney, Executive Board

Open Negotiations: A Mistake

There has been considerable discussion about our union adopting open negotiations for our contract. Proponents argue this would allow members to know what is being asked and offered. However, I believe maintaining our current approach is essential.

The NALC has traditionally kept negotiations private, and with good reason. Members already have a system to influence national negotiations: resolutions passed at national conventions which guide our leaders on what members want in the next contract. I question what impact open negotiations would truly have. If members are dissatisfied with the negotiations, should our leaders simultaneously negotiate with both the members and the USPS? If so, which members should they prioritize—the newer members seeking immediate pay raises or the senior members asserting they deserve more for their long service? This could only deepen divisions within our ranks.

Publicizing our negotiations would be a significant error. Top-scale letter carriers earn as much as the average household income. Including benefits, our compensation far exceeds the average household income in the United States. This information would be sensationalized by critics, who would portray us as overpaid government workers demanding too much from a USPS that loses billions annually. They would argue that meeting our demands would require taxpayer funding, which would lead to a loss of public support. Nobody wants their taxes increased, and if the USPS cannot dominate the parcel delivery market, taxpayer funding may be our only option. With declining mail volumes in our increasingly digital world, our leverage is weakening. Publications like National Geographic now offer only online content to new subscribers, and first-class mail and magazines are a fraction of their former volume.

Our members' demands, often voiced on social media, seem disconnected from our current realities. Unlike during the 1970 strike, we are no longer indispensable. We face intense competition not just from UPS and FedEx, but also from companies like Shipt, Amazon, GrubHub, Instacart, and DoorDash, which now deliver a wide range of goods. As some members demand significantly higher wages without proposing viable funding solutions, I worry we are on the same path as the dinosaurs.

Jonathan Garcia, Executive Board

Greetings Brothers and Sisters. On May 16, Sens. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Josh Hawley (R-MO) introduced the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act (S. 4356) in the Senate, mirroring H.R. 7629. We all have the right to be protected and feel safe on the job. We urge Congress to pass this bill which would help deter crimes against letter carriers by making long overdue upgrades to mailboxes and strengthening federal penalties for assaulting a postal worker.

We work day in and day out to fulfill the critical needs of our customers such as package deliveries and medicine. We are working longer hours, short-handed in the darkness which presents its own set of issues and now must look over our shoulders for the criminal element who are looking for arrow keys, packages, checks and even our own personal valuables.

Let us get the word out! Enough is Enough!! Protect our Letter Carriers!!! Stay vigilant! Contact your representatives and let them know what this critical bipartisan legislation means to you. Attend rallies and stay alert out there. Stay safe and have a great summer.

MSALC 2024 CONVENTION

New Location!

Golf!

October 7-9!

MDA!

**Sugar Lake Lodge,
near Grand Rapids!**

More Information Coming Soon!

Max Olsen, LCCL 3

Progress on our legislative priorities continues to move forward at a slow pace in the current congress. HR 82, The Social Security Fairness Act has seen some small momentum, with the house Ways and Means committee holding a hearing on the bill on April 16, moving it one step closer to a full vote on the house floor. HR 82 currently has 320 cosponsors and is supported by Dean Phillips, who represents the third district.

Phillips has also cosponsored HR 7629, The Protect our Letter Carriers Act, since it was introduced in March, the bill currently has 79 cosponsors. HR 7629 would address crime targeted at letter carriers by providing funding to update our arrow key locks, require all judicial districts to appoint an assistant US attorney dedicated to crimes against postal employees, and amend sentencing guidelines so that assaults against letter carriers carry the same sentence as assaults against law enforcement officers.

Phillips has also recently signed on to HR 5995, The Federal Retirement Fairness Act. The bill currently has 107 cosponsors, and would allow federal employees under the FERS retirement program to buy back time served in a non-career status. Bills that Phillips has yet to sign on to include HR 1439, The Vote at Home Act, which currently has 23 cosponsors, and HR 3721, The United States Postal Service Shipping Equity Act, which currently has 22 cosponsors.

In terms of non-postal legislative action, most the progress being made in the district has been through large government funding bills. Phillips was able to secure funding for a number of projects across the third district. These include investments in public safety, upgrades to drinking water infrastructure, and funding for a number of parks and trails projects. Phillips has also recently introduced the Voter Choice Act, which would provide funding to states that choose to implement a ranked choice voting system.

Lastly, I'd like to touch on the upcoming election. Representative Phillips has decided he will not be seeking reelection in the upcoming November election. On the Democratic side, current state senator Kelly Morrison is running unopposed. On the Republican side there will be a contested primary with Blaize Harty, Tad Jude, Brad Kohler, James Page, and Quentin Wittrock seeking the nomination. I encourage all member to participate in the upcoming primary election on Tuesday, August 13th.

Harold Weed, LCCL 1

Since my last newsletter article, CD 1 constituents have a congressional candidate contest to consider. Rachel Bohman has been endorsed by the CD 1 DFL convention delegates to represent this district in the upcoming primary and general elections against current U.S. Representative, Brad Finstad.

Rachel is a lawyer and former Hennepin County elections chief and former Rochester Township Board member. Rochester is her home town. Her opponent, Finstad, has been in office since August 2022.

I was able to meet with Rachel at the Nicollet County DFL Convention and at the annual fundraiser, Burton Dinner, in Mankato. Indivisible of St. Peter/Mankato held a meet and greet before the Burton Dinner.

Contact information for Rachel Bohman is PO Box 5805, Rochester, MN 55903 or www.bohmanforcongress.com.

Our current representative, Brad Finstad, has long supported HR 82. He has not responded to requests to co-sponsor HR 7629 "Protect Our Carriers Act". His primary constituent office is located in Rochester. The office in New Ulm is by appointment only. I am not aware of any town hall meetings planned for this district.

Thanks, letter carriers, for all you do to deliver the mail.



USPS Next Generation Delivery Vehicle (NGDV)

These new vehicles have been delivered to the USPS by Oshkosh Defense and are ready for use in Georgia.

Eduardo Silva, Executive Board; LCCL 6

Greetings Brothers and Sisters! I would like to touch base about our 6th District and what our house representative Tom Emmer has been doing in order to defend our postal issues. Unfortunately, he has done nothing about it lately. The main reason is that Emmer is totally focused on helping Donald Trump in his campaign for re-election.

The GOP are focused on winning the state of Minnesota and they will do everything they can to flip our state. In order to be successful, Tom Emmer is a big piece of the puzzle. On May 17th, Donald Trump was the keynote speaker at the Minnesota GOP Lincoln Reagan Dinner in St. Paul and Tom Emmer was also one of the speakers when he made the commitment to dedicate lots of time to help re-elected Trump.

Unfortunately, Emmer does not have any competition in the 6th District. The Democratic Party does not have any candidates who are strong, charismatic and persuasive in the District to compete with Emmer. The lack of funding is another issue. Emmer has the political machine in his hand to raise millions of dollars extremely fast, which for the Democrats is almost impossible. The situation is not good, we are continuing to try to work with Emmer in order to get his support for our causes. At first, we were very successful, but lately we got stuck into a place where we have not seen any support whatsoever. We will continue pursuing Emmer and his staff regarding issues that are very important to us.

I would also like to remind you how crucial it is to vote in this upcoming election. Legislation and politics are not subjects that many co-workers like to talk about. However, this upcoming election is fundamental for the future of our company and the stability of our job. Maybe neither of the two candidates for presidency are very appealing to vote for, surely their age also does not help stimulate our young voters to come out and vote. But take a minute to think about what is best for our future as an organization, and for our family members and co-workers.

Electing an unstable candidate who was just convicted of crime back to the White House can bring very difficult times ahead of us. In the November elections, think very carefully about it and please vote!

I hope everyone has a fantastic summer with your loved ones, be safe and have fun!

Best Regards

Nicholas Tiemann, Executive Board

Summer weather is back and with it will be bringing the heat soon enough. As we transition from pants to shorts, we all need to stay diligent to protect ourselves from the sun and high temperatures again. I want to touch on some tips to help you stay safe and beat the heat. Drink plenty of water throughout the day. Sport drinks with electrolytes and powder electrolyte packets that you can add to your water bottle are also a good choice. You should try to avoid sugary drinks and ones with caffeine as those drinks can cause your body to dehydrate faster. It is so important to stay hydrated on hot days. Since we are mostly outside all day, try to work in the shade the best you can and think about wearing a hat to help keep your face covered. Soaking a cooling towel can also help keep you feeling cool. Also, find air conditioning to cool off during breaks. Did you know that if it is only 80 degrees outside that vehicles can reach temperatures up to 118 degrees in about 20 minutes? Please be aware of the signs of heat related illnesses such as heat stroke, heat cramps, and heat exhaustion. If you start experiencing signs of high body temperatures, you stop sweating, you have hot or dry skin, and start experiencing dizziness and confusion. You could be having a heat stroke and you should seek help immediately by calling 911 and try to cool yourself down as quickly as you can while help arrives. Summer is a great time to be delivering so let's all do our best to keep ourselves safe.

Andrew Hagan, LCCL 5

Hello Brothers and Sisters,

I am Andrew Hagan, and I am the LCCL for Rep. Omar for congressional district 5. I've been a carrier since February of 2021 after a 5-year career as a casino dealer in Minnesota, Iowa and Nevada. Covid really showed the importance of job security and as we all know the post office is pretty secure. I have taken on the role as Branch 9 Letter Carrier Political Fund Coordinator, head steward at Loring station, union organizer and carrier facilitator for new carriers.

I am happy to share with all of you the latest on politics in our community and state. First off, I'd like to share my experience at the Humphrey Mondale dinner on March 15th. Pal 9 bought a table and a handful of Branch 9 members were able to go. It was encouraging to hear the enormous amount of support labor has from Representative Craig and both Senators Klobuchar and Smith. It is clear that this is a big election for workers' rights. The keynote speaker was Senator Warnock from the state of Georgia. I happened to be in the right place at the right time and I actually got to meet the Senator. Reading articles coming out of his district I can say he is a big advocate for labor unions. It was interesting to hear him speak and tie in his previous work before being a Senator. He has been the head pastor at Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church since 2005. The incredible Representative John Lewis from Georgia was a member of that church. Senator Warnock actually oversaw Representative Lewis' funeral in July of 2020. As I am getting more involved in this position as LCPF coordinator I am learning quickly that we have incredible support for the post office and our union around the country and here in our state. It is an important election year for the labor movement and us as postal workers. Senator Klobuchar is up for reelection and Representative Craig and Omar are as well. I was able to interview Representative Omar on the topic of Postal Service and our union. Here is what she had to say:

She has a family history connected with the USPS: her father was a longtime employee, and she was for a short period as well. There is hardly a corner of this country that isn't deeply interconnected with the USPS, either as employees or customers or both. To Omar, USPS represents some of the best of the American tradition. Omar recognizes that under DeJoy's leadership, USPS is facing a crisis of faith from its customers, workers, lawmakers, and everyone in between. Congress must provide better support for the workers who make up USPS. She has committed that she is against privatization of the USPS. Omar has signed onto some of the bills we support, but has not yet signed onto the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act.

I'll finish with region seven training. Renfroe says we as a whole union are 12% politically organized. I can only imagine how powerful we could be if we got to 20% politically organized. But before we look at the big picture we have to look at our own state. We have to do better so our mission can continue in the U.S capital. We have important bills currently waiting to be voted on in the U.S house. H.R 7629 is the "Protect Our Letter Carrier Act" and H.R 5995 is the "federal retirement fairness act". Both of these bills take a lot of money to get passed. There is word that there might be a QR code available in the coming months. That will make signing up even easier for LCPF. Remember you can sign up for as little as a dollar a paycheck! Please go to NALC.org for instructions on how to sign up. Thank you for your support!

Join us for the 2024 NALC National Convention Region 7 Gathering!!

**Monday, August 5th 7pm-9pm
Seapoint Bar and Grill
367 E 8th St
Boston, MA 02127**

**Cost: \$60/person. Price includes 2
beer/wine tickets, unlimited soda,
appetizers, and admission. Must RSVP
and send payment by 7/22/24**

Name(s):

Branch:

Amount Enclosed: \$

**MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO PATRICK JOHNSON. SEND TO:
NALC Region 7
1300 Godward St NE, Ste 2600
Minneapolis, MN 55413**

Abigail Small, LCCL 4

Summer has started, which means fall— and election season— are just around the corner. In the 4th district, Betty McCollum faces the same opponents she has in prior elections. The primary challengers for the seat are Republican candidates May Lor Xiong, who McCollum beat in 2022 with 67% of the vote, and Mike Casey. With a strong win in years prior, and currently serving as the incumbent representative, I am sure she will still be in office after the November election. That being said, it is a good reminder to pay attention to what she has been working on and supporting which impacts letter carriers directly.

She has supported legislation in years prior to expand options for absentee voting, primarily mail-in ballots. She has also voted in ways that benefit labor unions in general, such as her current support of H.R. 20. This spring, she has signed on as a co-sponsor to several bills that have been discussed in the last issue. She is one of 79 cosponsors on H.R. 7629: Protect Our Letter Carriers Act and one of 320 on H.R. 82: Social Security Fairness Act.

There are still several bills that impact us which she has not co-sponsored. Those include the legislation for preserving door delivery, creating shipping equitability for alcoholic beverages, and importantly H.R. 5995, which allows for time spent as a TE or CCA to be “purchased” and count toward retirement benefits.

The NALC.org website offers an overview of these bills, as well as contact information for representatives. If you are a resident of the 4th district, reach out and express your views as one of her constituents. These are all bills that align with her stated platform, and expressing your support of them through calls, emails, and letters can help draw attention to the importance of these issues. Keep yourself informed, and stay cool!

Robb Petersburg, Editor

Well, this is unusual. The party of “law and order” has chosen a 34-time convicted felon to lead their efforts to the White House. Here in Minneapolis, a staunch Democrat refuses to sign onto the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act (POLCA), which is designed to promote safety for working class federal union members. She will not sign up because it will increase penalties for criminals who attack defenseless letter carriers. One Republican in Minnesota has supported some of our issues, because his constituents value the good quality public service that we provide. That same politician has admitted he would vote to privatize the USPS if given the opportunity.

I mention these things because politics have become almost comical. Just when you think you have them figured out, they throw a curveball. Political party lines do not matter to the NALC. What matters to us is whether we have support on our issues. Our state legislative liaisons do a fantastic job getting in contact with our district representatives. However, not all are on board with our legislative concerns. One reason is because they simply do not understand our issues. This is where the MSALC steps in. One of our goals is to educate our representatives on why our issues are important not only to us, but to their communities as well.

Another reason they may not be on board is that they likely have not heard from enough of their constituents. That is where the rest of us step in. Our politicians need to hear from us, the people they represent, regarding the issues that are important to us. I just emailed both Senators and my District Representative asking them to support the POLCA. It took less than four minutes from the NALC app on my phone. You can also use the Take Action tab on the website. I did not have to think of something to say, it sends a pre-written message. I guarantee if all 5,500 of us in Minnesota take four minutes to email our representatives, we will have 100% support from our state politicians. Be safe and enjoy the summer!

Shawn Hansen , LCCL 8

The 2024 8th congressional race is the same candidates who ran against each other in 2022. Pete Stauber is the Republican incumbent, and Jen Schultz is the DFL endorsed candidate, and once again Harry Welty is running against Pete Stauber in the August Primary.

The rest of this is in part, an article written by Timothy Noah in The New Republic titled "Here's what Trump and the GOP really think about the working class". It quotes an April New York Times/Siena poll. Donald Trump leads likely voters without a college degree 53% to 39%. It also argues that whenever the GOP is in charge of the House of Representatives it renames the Education and Labor committee to the Education and Workforce committee. With the GOP in charge of the committee, they have held multiple anti-union hearings, the last titled "Big Labor Lies: Exposing Union Tactics Undermine Free Labor and Fair Elections".

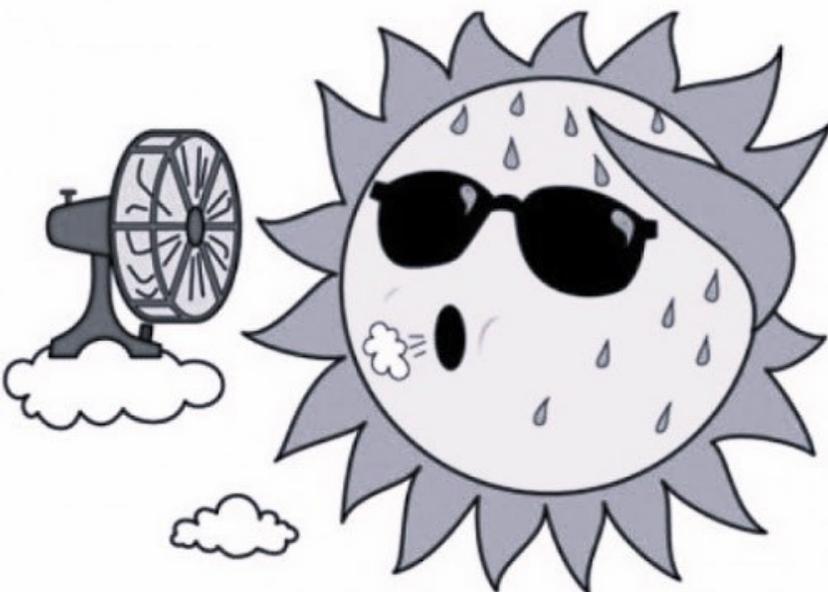
With a very active Pro-Union summer behind us, you would think this would change the perception of some GOP members on that committee. Regardless, Republican Bob Good said, "Unions are contrary to a strong economy". Trump was anti-union just like Bob Good. As President, he appointed anti-union members to the National Relations Board.

So, what could a second term of Donald Trump look like? In Trump's own think tank, Linda McMahon, posted in an op-ed that attacked Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer for signing a law that repealed the state's right to work law.

With all of this, it does not mean every Republican is anti-union and every Democrat is pro-union. But as for this year's Presidential race, there is no comparison.

This is why contributing to the Letter Carrier Pac Fund is so vital. Without it, The Postal Reform Act would of never happened. Without it, we could lose our right to bargain a contract with the Postal Service and go back to collective begging. Our dollars only go to those who support us, regardless of party. If you are not currently contributing to LCPF, I hope this, and maybe someone else would change your mind.

Stay safe this summer!



Prevent Heat Illnesses. Know the Signs and Act.

HEAT EXHAUSTION	OR	HEAT STROKE
Faint or dizzy		Throbbing headache
Excessive sweating		No sweating
Cool, pale, clammy skin		Body temperature above 103° Red, hot, dry skin
Nausea or vomiting		Nausea or vomiting
Rapid, weak pulse		Rapid, strong pulse
Muscle cramps		May lose consciousness
CALL 9-1-1		CALL 9-1-1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get to a cooler, air conditioned place Drink water if fully conscious Take a cool shower or use cold compresses 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take immediate action to cool the person until help arrives

SAFETY DEPENDS ON ME!

Seek Immediate Medical Assistance for Heat Related Illnesses. Call 9-1-1.

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