



NRLCA FACT SHEET

National Rural Letter Carriers' Association
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Part-Time Service Buy Back Legislation

We have a classification of Rural Letter Carriers called Rural Carrier Associates (RCA). RCAs are part-time carriers who do not earn retirement benefits until they acquire career status. The majority of rural carriers start out as an RCA and on average it takes about six years for them to become a Regular Carrier, but it is not uncommon for it to take 10-plus years to become a Regular career employee. Until 1989, RCA employees were able to make “catch up” retirement contributions to allow for an on-time retirement, but that authorization has since expired.

The current retention rate of RCA employees is extremely low, with approximately 50% leaving the Postal Service. This results in the Postal Service spending millions of dollars for the training/hiring process. Retention of RCAs would benefit the Postal Service by reducing overtime payments to RCAs and Regular Carriers attributed to the lack of RCAs.

Allowing rural letter carriers to buy back time for years spent as an RCA after 1989 would give them the ability to have all their years of part-time service credited towards retirement. This would create an incentive for RCAs to continue their career with the United States Postal Service.

NRLCA Position:

NRLCA supports H.R. 4268, the “Federal Retirement Fairness Act”. This bipartisan legislation would allow rural letter carriers to “buy back” their time as a non-career employee, and be credited with all their years of service upon retirement. This could increase the retention of employees, reducing the Postal Service’s costs in training and processing of newly hired employees.

Contact Paul Swartz at pswartz@nrlca.org if you have any questions or would like more information