



NRLCA FACT SHEET

National Rural Letter Carriers' Association
1630 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-3467
Telephone: 703-684-5545
www.nrlca.org

NRLCA Urges Support for the Federal Retirement Fairness Act (H.R. 1522)

The majority of rural letter carriers begin their employment with the United States Postal Service (USPS) as a Rural Carrier Associate (RCA). RCAs are “non-career” carriers who do not earn retirement benefits until they acquire career status. On average, it takes about six years for an RCA to become a regular career employee, but it can take over a decade, making it difficult for rural carriers to work six to ten years longer to earn regular retirement benefits.

The current retention rate of RCA employees is extremely low, with approximately 50% leaving the Postal Service before they can enjoy the benefits of becoming a regular career employee. 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.

Allowing rural letter carriers to buy back time for years spent as an RCA would give letter carriers the ability to have all their years of “non-career” 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. 1522, legislation that would allow rural letter carriers and other postal/federal employees to “buy back” time spent as non-career employees and receive full credit for those years upon retirement. This bill would strengthen employee retention and help reduce Postal Service costs associated with recruiting, hiring, and training new workers.