

WHY I GIVE

LETTER CARRIER POLITICAL FUND

“My money is my voice in DC.”

“One wife, two kids, one mortgage, two cars = expensive. Job = priceless.”

“For my son, Matthew.”

“To support our union.”

At our 70th biennial convention in Los Angeles last August, NALC’s Legislative and Political Affairs Department asked delegates to share why they contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF). Thousands of letter carriers wrote many different reasons and posted them on a “Why I Give” wall at the Los Angeles Convention Center.

They came from every part of the country and represented all backgrounds—retirees and new carriers; men and women; people of all races and regions and political views. But they were united in their support for the jobs and futures of every letter carrier.

“We all have different reasons for supporting the Letter Carrier Political Fund,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said. “Letter carriers are a diverse group; a cross-section of America. But we all come together to speak with one voice. That’s what a union is all about.”

Under federal law, unions cannot use dues money for candi-

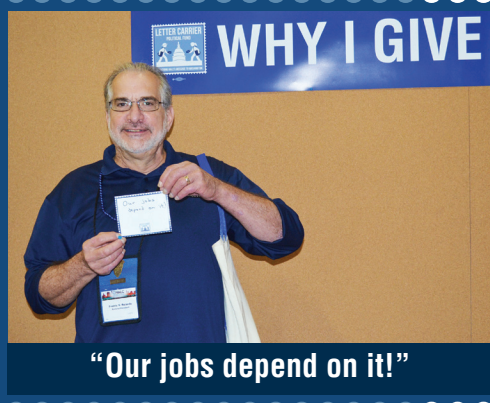
date contributions. LCPF is a political action committee (PAC) that is authorized to accept voluntary political donations from NALC members. Using these pooled funds, the PAC amplifies the union’s impact on the political process. LCPF supports pro-labor, pro-letter carrier congressional candidates, regardless of political party, with the hope that they will support and protect letter carrier interests as members of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

“Congress is the Postal Service’s *de facto* board of directors—535 people who have enormous power over our jobs and our future,” Rolando said. “Not only do they have near-total control over the Postal Service, they also legislate many of our benefits, including retirement and health care, and set the bounds of our collective-bargaining rights. We need to educate these 535 individuals and make them understand the value of the Postal Service and its letter carriers to all Americans.”

LCPF helps pro-letter carrier candidates in two important ways.

The PAC donates directly to candidates’ campaigns to help them cover the cost of campaign operations, which includes staff, offices, media, events and general operations. And while House districts are apportioned equally according to population, district sizes vary greatly. For Senate their geographical, campaigns must reach an entire state. In 2016, candidates in battleground Senate races spent an average of nearly \$20 million. In the House, some candidates spent nearly \$10 million.

But money alone cannot win races, so LCPF also devotes resources that allow for the release of a number of letter carriers to work on select races to get out the vote for letter carrier-friendly candidates. Most of the released carriers contact voters through phone banks or by walking door to door—something letter carriers



By making a contribution 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. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 per calendar year. Any guideline amount is merely a suggestion, and an individual is free to contribute more or less than the guideline suggests and the union will not favor or disadvantage anyone by reason of the amount of their contribution or their decision not to contribute.



are particularly good at, since we do it every day. Our knowledge of neighborhoods, ability to keep a strong pace and outgoing natures make us natural campaigners.

That leads us to the real value of the union's legislative and political activities—developing and maintaining relationships with members of Congress from both sides of the aisle that represent districts large and small, urban and rural, and everything in between. Through continued education, NALC works to gain support on the issues most important to letter carriers.

“Our union’s political diversity is among our greatest strengths in the political arena,” Rolando said, “because Congress is diverse as well. We have the potential to get all representatives to understand how the Postal Service is good for all of their constituents. Our PAC is an important part of this work.”

Just as explaining the benefits of joining the NALC to new letter carriers leads nearly all to join the union, Rolando said, letter carriers benefit from explaining our issues and concerns to members of Congress, because the facts are on our side.

“Postal issues are sometimes complex—think about the mandate to pre-fund retiree health care, for instance,” he said. “When legislators aren’t briefed on the issues, they can make uninformed decisions. We need to help them understand the issues and make informed decisions.”

In recent years, our allies in the House and Senate have helped us beat back more than a dozen attempts to end Saturday delivery and to deregulate mail delivery. They have helped us defeat bills aimed at ending door-to-door delivery, something that would have severely damaged our ability to capture the growing e-commerce delivery market. They helped us stop

several federal budget measures that would have drastically cut our pension and health care benefits.

As the new Congress begins its work, it appears that last November’s election results have made it easier for bad ideas, and perhaps some far worse ones, to become law. So having people who speak for us on Capitol Hill will be important in the coming years, as we could face proposals to not only cut pay and benefits and reduce service, but also challenges to our collective-bargaining rights or radical proposals to privatize the Postal Service.

The Letter Carrier Political Fund is an important tool in assuring that members of Congress understand our concerns, because it helps the union build relationships and open lines of communication with them.

“There’s never been a more crucial time for every letter carrier to participate in the political process to help protect all the gains we’ve made,” Rolando said.

The president noted that NALC has a multi-tiered legislative and political network designed to help members react and respond to challenges in Congress, and that LCPF is just one of the tools of that network.

In this issue of *The Postal Record*, NALC recognizes the active and retired members who supported LCPF last year for the benefit of all letter carriers. In an upcoming issue, we’ll explain

more about the broader network.

With LCPF, most supporters donate

by signing up for automatic withdrawal of a small amount of money from their paychecks each pay period through PostalEASE.

“This is the most convenient way to give,” Rolando said, “because, once you sign up, everything is automatic, and your donation is spread across the year.”

Automatic donations help the Political Fund by ensuring a steady source of funds throughout the year, which facilitates planning about how to best use the funds throughout each election cycle. In addition to automatic payroll deductions, active or retired letter carriers can easily arrange for automatic deductions from a bank account, and retired members can also contribute directly from an annuity.

NALC members can also make one-time contributions, or supplement their automatic donations, by writing a check to the Letter Carrier Political Fund.

To sign up or to get more information on how to donate, visit nalc.org/pac.

“We all need to do our part to protect our jobs and stand up for our families,” Rolando said. “The amount you give isn’t most important; that you participate is. Imagine our political strength if every letter carrier was an

LCPF supporter.

“Everyone has a different reason for giving to the Letter Carrier Political Fund,” he said, “but they’re all good reasons.”

As one supporter wrote on the wall at the convention, “NALC is the vessel that keeps carriers secure in

their jobs and salary and benefits, and I will help in any way I can.” **PR**



THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE IS SHIFTING, AND QUICKLY

For some time now, many members of Congress have been moving away from the moderate middle that used to make up the majority of both chambers. Likewise, the American people seem to be becoming more ideologically partisan. These factors contribute to congressional gridlock that has largely prevented our representatives from doing their jobs.

This is not likely to change anytime soon.

Each incoming wave of newly elected representatives seems to cement these realities. In recent years, freshmen House and Senate members have become less productive and receive less support from their own colleagues.

In the 114th Congress, 58 freshmen in the House of Representatives introduced 632 bills (an average of eight bills each) out of 6,431 bills—or just 9.7 percent of the total number of bills introduced. Only 149 of those bills made it out of committee, and a mere 22 were enacted into law.

In addition, these freshmen were less likely to co-sponsor bills introduced by a member of the opposing party, and they received comparatively little support for the legislation they introduced themselves.

What this means for NALC members is that it remains crucial that we have friends on both sides of the aisle who have an established relationship with our members before they come to

Washington, DC, so they are informed on our issues. This pre-established

relationship will make them more likely to support the Postal Service and letter carrier jobs. Through the Letter Carrier Political Fund, we can establish these relationships early and potentially support those who will support letter carriers.

A strong LCPF with maximum NALC participation makes this possible.

And there's no time to waste: Candidates and incumbents are already preparing for the 2018 midterms. All

435 House representatives, as well as 33 senators, are up for re-election in November 2018.

The political landscape we see on Capitol Hill will largely depend on what happens in individual states, howev-

er. The 2018 midterm elections will be the last to take place before the 2020 census—and with each census comes redistricting, or the apportionment of House seats (and therefore electoral

votes) based on changes in the population. If redistricting were done today,

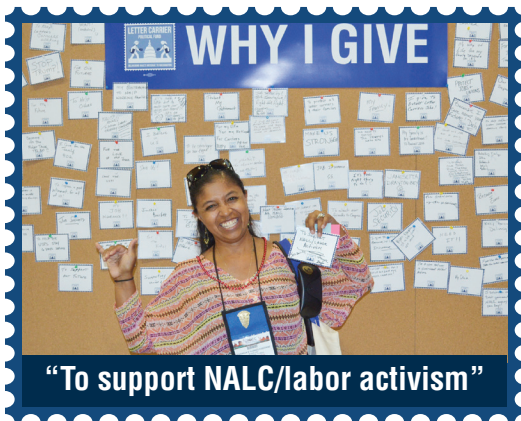
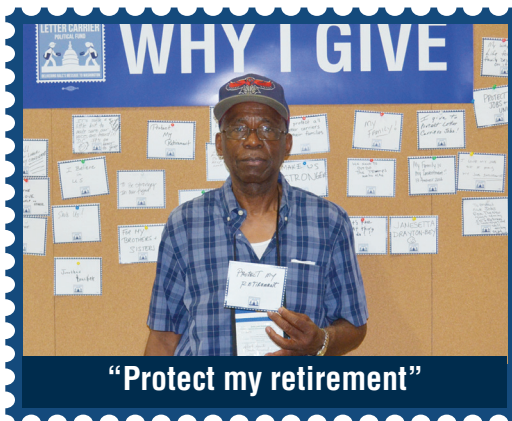
Florida, North Carolina and Oregon would each gain one House seat, while Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Pennsylvania and Texas each would lose one.

With such a rapidly changing political environment,

letter carriers must keep building relationships with their House and Senate representatives (and any local leaders who might replace them). By putting a personal face on the work that letter carriers do, we can build relationships with Republicans, Democrats and independents who could one day help us break through congressional gridlock.

For example, a resolution in the 114th Congress that encouraged the Postal Service to protect door-to-door delivery was introduced by Rep. Susan Davis (D-CA) and two Republican colleagues (Rep. David Joyce of Ohio and Rep. Peter King of New York), largely because letter carriers had developed close relationships with these members back home in their districts. Eventually, 228 bipartisan members of Congress co-sponsored the resolution—which has been reintroduced in this Congress as H. Res. 28.

Keep this example of success in mind as you meet with local leaders and introduce them to the work that letter carriers do. And when they run for re-election or seek higher office, NALC will be ready to stand behind those who have promised





COMPLIANCE 101

INCREASING PAC PARTICIPATION WITHOUT BREAKING ANY RULES

NALC's leaders, from President Rolando to thousands of activists at the branch, state and regional levels, have a long history of working to help elect pro-letter carrier candidates by encouraging increased contributions to our political action committee (PAC), the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF).

By recruiting active and retired NALC members to become PAC contributors, we help ensure that those who are elected to represent us in Washington will be champions for letter carriers and the issues that matter most to us.

Whether you're a seasoned PAC recruiter or are trying to plan your first fundraising event, the tips below reflect some of the most important rules that govern the LCPF.

If you have any questions or concerns, NALC's Department of Legislative and Political Affairs can help make sure that you comply with the appropriate regulations—and that we continue to build up this crucial tool.

WHO CAN GIVE?

- NALC members
- Staff employed by NALC
- Immediate family members of the above

HOW CAN I SOLICIT CONTRIBUTIONS?

- ✓ Flyers
- ✓ Newsletters
- ✓ Mailers
- ✓ By phone
- ✓ e-mails
- ✓ In person

X 50/50 raffles may violate the law in your state and NALC advises against them.

HOW DO I ACTUALLY CONTRIBUTE?

- PostalEase
- Electronic Funds Transfer
- OPM annuity
- Check*
- Cash*

*Specific processes apply. Please contact NALC Department of Legislative and Political Affairs for more information.

ARE THERE DISCLOSURES THAT ARE REQUIRED?

Yes. Federal law requires that all solicitations include the following language:

By making a contribution 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. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 per calendar year. Any guideline amount is merely a suggestion, and an individual is free to contribute more or less than the guideline suggests and the union will not favor or disadvantage anyone by reason of the amount of their contribution or their decision not to contribute.

Contact NALC for the exact language required. **PR**

GROWING THE PAC

The work by our legislators in Washington can have a big impact for Americans as well as for businesses and other organizations. From legislative changes to regulatory decisions, priority for public spending to who pays what in taxes—it can all change depending on legislators' priorities. So it's no surprise that tens of thousands of businesses, unions and other organized interests look to make and support friends in Congress through election spending.

Given that Congress has final say on many aspects of the activities of the U.S. Postal Service, as well as on the compensation and benefits of postal employees and our collective-bargaining rights, letter carriers have no choice but to be political players as well.

"Through the Letter Carrier Political Fund, letter carriers have a strong voice on Capitol Hill," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "But how strong it can be depends on how many of our members contribute—that is, the size of our PAC. Simply put, the more LCPF resources we have, the more we can do to protect the nation's postal networks and to fend off the never-ending threats to our collective-bargaining rights and to our well-earned pay and benefits." **PR**