



News from Washington

Federal Retirement Fairness Act expected to be reintroduced in House

As this magazine was going to print, the Federal Retirement Fairness Act was expected to be reintroduced any day. Reps. Derek Kilmer (D-WA), David Valadao (R-CA), Don Bacon (R-NE) and Gerry Connolly (D-VA) were expected to reintroduce the bill, which would allow certain federal employees to make catch-up retirement contributions for time spent as non-career employees after Dec. 31, 1988, making it creditable service under the Federal Employees Retirement System.

The legislation would cover letter carriers who were employed as casuals, transitional employees or city carrier assistants, providing them with greater retirement security.

“NALC is pleased to see the Federal Retirement Fairness Act reintroduced in the House,” NALC President Brian L. Renfroe said. “We urge the House to pass this bill, which would benefit letter carriers and other federal employees who have devoted their working lives to public service. A significant number of active city letter carriers have worked in a non-career position, and that time is not currently creditable for retirement. This bill would change that, allowing letter carriers, and millions of other federal employees, to buy back this time and plan for their well-earned retirements.”

This bill is a top priority for NALC. For the latest information, please check the “Government Affairs” section of nalc.org and visit nalc.org/factsheets.

Taub and Day confirmed for PRC

On Sept. 28, the Senate confirmed the nominations of Thom-

as G. Day and Robert G. Taub to be commissioners of the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC). After they were nominated by President Biden to serve as PRC commissioners, the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs had advanced their nominations following hearings earlier in September.

The PRC is an independent agency that exercises regulatory oversight over the Postal Service. Its responsibilities include preventing anticompetitive practices, promoting accountability, adjudicating complaints, setting postal rates and helping oversee delivery service standards.

The PRC is made up of five commissioners who are nominated by the president for six-year terms and confirmed by the Senate. Taub is a two-time appointee to the commission following unanimous confirmations by the Senate in 2011 and 2016. Taub previously served as chairman of the commission from December 2014 until January 2021. Day, a first-term commissioner, will bring broad experience in both the global and domestic postal

sectors, including 35 years working in senior roles at the Postal Service. Day and Taub were both confirmed for terms that will expire on Oct. 14, 2028.

“NALC congratulates Thomas Day and Robert Taub on their confirmations to this important agency,” President Renfroe said. “We look forward to working with them to ensure that the Postal Regulatory Commission fulfills its oversight responsibilities to promote a Postal Service that benefits the letter carriers who deliver America’s mail and our customers.”

Congress narrowly funds government through Nov. 17; House speaker battle continues

On Sept. 30, President Biden signed a continuing resolution that Congress had passed hours before, narrowly avoiding a government shutdown that would have been triggered the next day.

After weeks of partisan fighting and failure of both chambers to pass the 12 appropriations bills needed to fund the government, the House voted 335-91 to extend government funding at current

IT TAKES ALL OF US



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levels through Nov. 17. In a bipartisan vote, 209 Democratic members—all party members except Rep. Mike Quigley (D-IL)—voted for the measure while only 126 Republicans did so; 90 Republicans voted against the measure.

Hours after House passage, the Senate passed the continuing resolution in an 88-9 vote, sending the measure to President Biden's desk. He signed it the same night before the midnight deadline.

Despite the bipartisan nature of the stopgap bill, a small number of Republicans said they were furious that Rep. McCarthy had worked with Democrats to move the measure forward. On Oct. 3, Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-FL) acted on a threat he had been making for months by filing a motion to vacate the House speaker position. The same day, the House held a vote on the motion, which passed and removed Rep. McCarthy as speaker, the first time that has happened in history.

In a 216-210 vote, eight Republicans joined all Democrats to remove Rep. McCarthy from the leading House role. Republican Reps. Andy Biggs (AZ), Ken Buck (CO), Tim Burchett (TN), Eli Crane (AZ), Bob Good (VA), Nancy Mace (SC) and Matt Rosendale (MT) joined Gaetz in voting to oust Speaker McCarthy. Following the vote, Rep. Patrick McHenry (R-NC), who was named speaker pro tempore, immediately recessed the chamber.

After McCarthy announced that he would not seek the role of speaker again, there was no clear successor. Without a speaker, the House is essentially frozen and cannot consider any legislation on the House floor. With a government shutdown looming, a nonfunctional House has serious repercussions for all Americans.

On Oct. 11, more than a week after McCarthy was ousted, the Republican caucus held a closed-door meeting to choose its speaker nominee. In a 113-99 vote, Rep. Steve Scalise (R-LA), the current majority leader, defeated Rep. Jim Jordan (R-OH). However, a nominee needs a majority of House members (currently 217 votes, with two vacancies), to become speaker. Scalise was unable to whip enough votes to win the position, and he dropped out of the race just one day after GOP members had chosen him as their candidate. Jordan was then selected as the second Republican nominee. He lost a vote on the House floor as this magazine was going to print, with 20 Republicans opting not to vote for Jordan. As this magazine was going to print, it remained unclear who could become speaker or when.

While in-fighting in the Republican Party continues, the Democratic Party has been putting up a unified front, reiterating that their choice for House speaker has been and will remain Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY). While Jeffries would not receive a majority of House votes unless some Republicans unexpectedly decide to side with him, the House Democrats are using this moment to contrast their unity with the divided Republicans.

Regardless of who becomes speaker and how the remainder of the 118th Congress shakes out, it is all but certain that whichever party has control in the next Congress will have only a slim majority, meaning that to successfully govern, lawmakers will have to work in bipartisan manner to move any legislation forward.

This means that now, more than ever, it is important to have pro-letter

Have questions or need additional resources? Contact your LPO.

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carrier lawmakers on both sides of the aisle. Despite partisan divisions and contentious issues, when candidates who support letter carriers are elected, NALC comes out on top. Leadership and support from both sides of the aisle propelled the Postal Service Reform Act into law last year. NALC will continue to take a bipartisan approach to our issues to keep achieving victories for letter carriers.

Our success on Capitol Hill, including electing pro-letter carrier candidates, is made possible through the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF). When you contribute to LCPF, you are contributing to your job and your retirement security. LCPF funds are used to help elect candidates who will support our issues and stand with letter carriers. It is critical that we continue to work together to ensure pro-letter carrier members are elected nationwide. To sign up or get more information on how to donate to LCPF, visit nalc.org/pac. **PR**