



National Association
of Letter Carriers

William H. Young, President
February 10, 2006 No. 06-03

NALC Bulletin

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'Gimme 5 for COLCPE'

NALC Launches Campaign To Return Letter Carrier PAC To 'Big Leagues' of Politics

SENATE PASSES POSTAL REFORM

Young Praises Bipartisan Approval; Next Step: House-Senate Conference

NALC to Work with Panel on Final Language

The Senate on February 9 passed S. 662, the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act and moved postal reform legislation on to a critical House-Senate conference committee to work out differences with the House-passed version needed before final congressional approval.

The Senate action came on a unanimous consent request by Senate Republican leader Bill Frist of Tennessee that enabled passage to occur without lengthy floor debate. It followed decisions by GOP Sens. Jeff Sessions of Alabama and Jim DeMint of South Carolina to lift the "hold" each had placed on the bill in the aftermath of a vehement campaign by Postal Service Board of Governors Chairman James Miller to block passage.

The House last summer had passed H.R. 22 by a 410-20 vote.

NALC President William H. Young applauded that Senate action, but warned that the battle is not over yet.

'Important Step'

"I am very pleased that the Senate has now joined the House in approving much overdue postal reform legislation," Young said. "This is an important step — one that hopefully will lead to speedy action by the House-Senate conference to attain final language for the president's signature."

"Our work is not finished," Young emphasized.

"This union will work with the conferees so that the legislation enacted into law not only will protect the collective bargaining rights of the men and women we represent, but also will ensure efficient, universal mail delivery to all Americans for decades to come, coupled with marketing and pricing flexibility to enable the Postal Service to compete successfully in the Internet Age," Young said.

Young singled out for praise Senate Government Affairs Chair Susan Collins (R-ME) and Sen. Tom Carper (D-DE), citing their diligence in pressing their colleagues for passage against the limited, but vocal, efforts by further delay floor action.

"Senators Collins and Carper are champions to the millions of people who rely on the U.S. mail everyday and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future," Young said.

Protects Bargaining

The bill would preserve six-day delivery and universal service while protecting postal employees' collective bargaining rights. It would also repeal the Postal Service's obligation to make a \$3.3 billion per year contribution to an escrow account and also reverse the unfair allocation of military pension costs to the USPS.

In a message to NALC e-Activists, President Young cited some concerns that must be worked out, including an "exigency" clause covering when USPS can raise postage rates more than the rate of inflation. The NALC supports the House-passed language.

"We must be diligent and stay vigilant to make sure that this legislation does the most it can to protect our jobs," Young said.

Major Revamping!

NALC Toughens Grassroots Political/Legislative Effort



In right photo, President Young discusses NALC issues with Rep. Ben Cardin (D-MD) after Cardin addressed State Chairs dinner. Cardin is seeking the Democratic senatorial nomination in Maryland. Left top photo shows George Gould, assistant to President Young for political and legislative affairs, moderating a panel during a workshop session. Panelists (l-r) are John Kilvington, Ann Fisher and Nanci Langley, all top staff officials of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. At bottom, state NALC leaders listen attentively.

NALC President William H. Young unveiled a major reorganization and strengthening of the union's political and legislative programs February 1 as state chairs assembled in Washington for a week-long training workshop.

National Business Agents will have a much more prominent role in politics and legislation, completing the gradual evolution of their job away from a near-total preoccupation with grievance handling. For state chairs, the reorganization will complete a policy change adopted in the 1980s to shift the emphasis of the State Associations from generic education and training to legislation and politics.

"We are going to revamp our entire grassroots political and legislative operation," Young said. **"In so doing, we are going to make the NALC a much stronger player in Washington and in the field in both politics and legislative matters."**

He said the goal is to build on the success of the e-Activist network, now nearly



President Young holds up 'Gimme 5 for COLCPE' logo February 2 in Washington while emphasizing to state chairs the need for a stronger political action committee.

Coupled with the major restructuring of the union's grassroots legislative program is a determination to return NALC's political action committee — the Committee on Letter Carriers Political Education (COLCPE) — to the top ranks of PACs in America.

President Young, alluding to several notorious Washington scandals — many which are still being investigated — told the state chairs February 2 that there will always be dirty money in American politics.

"What we need is clean money to combat it," he said. "That's where the labor movement and their PACs and the NALC and COLCPE come in."

"We need COLCPE to help elect Members of Congress from both parties who will stand up for working people like the hard-working letter carriers we represent," he said. **"Elections are expensive and if we don't raise money to elect a pro-union Congress, we will simply cede our democracy to the corporate interests and unscrupulous ideologues who will always find a way to funnel money to politicians willing to do their bidding."**

Young noted that 20 years ago, COLCPE routinely ranked in the top 10 PACs in the country. But it has not kept pace and last year, COLCPE ranked 37th among the country's PACs. PACs sponsored by United Parcel Service, FedEx and even the APWU, are now much bigger than COLCPE.

"I want to change that," Young said. **"I want the NALC to be the largest PAC in the postal industry. I want to match our leadership in the legislative arena with leadership in the political arena. And I want to return to the Top 10 PACs in America."**

So how will we raise more funds for COLCPE?

Young said the key will be to enlist more members to give to COLCPE through automatic deductions from their paychecks or their bank accounts. (At present, about three percent of NALC members make such automatic contributions.)

To do that, Young said two important steps will be taken.

- Every branch president with at least 50 members will be asked to appoint a COLCPE coordinator to work with state chairs and the national office on enlisting carriers to sign up for automatic contribution deductions.
- A new campaign will be launched called the **"Gimme 5 for COLCPE"** campaign, asking members to do what 5,000+ active carriers already do: give an average of \$5 per pay period to COLCPE through payroll deductions.

"That's just 50 cents per day, far less than the cost of a cup of fancy coffee at Starbucks that many of our members stop for routinely each day," Young noted.

The union plans to utilize its publications, web site and direct mail to spread the 'Gimme 5' message. Resident national officers and NBAs will take the message to the field throughout the year and the Regional Field Coordinators will integrate 'Gimme 5' in training at state conventions and regional training events.

There will be rewards for members who give and leaders who produce results.

Carriers who sign up will receive a special lapel pin to wear to show their commitment to protecting our jobs and benefits. At the National Convention in Las Vegas, carriers who are signed up for automatic contributions will receive a special T-shirt to wear on "COLCPE Day" at the convention.

S-T Training Registration Closed

Registration has closed for training seminars to be presented Feb. 15-16 in Baltimore and March 7-8 in Pittsburgh for branch secretary-treasurers and other local and state officers chiefly responsible for financial administration in NALC branches and state associations.

Individuals attending the February training should have received an agenda that was mailed February 6 and 7.

The March training is filled to capacity and branch leaders registered for March will soon receive a preliminary questionnaire which should be filled out and returned to the office of Secretary-Treasurer Jane E. Broendel.

A shorter version of the seminar is being planned for the NALC National Convention in Las Vegas in August.

140,000 people strong, by taking two major steps:

- Build a nationwide political and legislative infrastructure that will strengthen state and local grassroots networks to ensure that NALC becomes more than a mere dispenser of campaign cash at election time, but a major force in legislative battles year-round and a major player in campaigns throughout the election cycle.
- Raise significantly more money for COLCPE to help elect more friends to Congress.

Young said the change means that state chairs must adopt new priorities for their work for the union and use resources in different ways. This includes installing lines into large branch offices for use by NALC phone banks, organizing campaign schools and covering the expenses of NALC representatives to attend local political events.

"Why are we doing this now?" Young asked rhetorically. "Because, quite simply, we have to do it."

"The very future of the Postal Service in the Internet age is at stake," Young said. "So is the future viability of the American labor movement." He noted that last year the percentage of workers belonging to a union in the private sector dropped to just 7.9 percent.

"If we do not elect a more NALC-friendly and labor-friendly Congress in the next two or three election cycles, the pay, benefits and job security of our members and the middle-class of this country will simply collapse," Young said.