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President Renfro testifies before Congress on urgent need to protect letter carriers from crime

On July 23, NALC President Brian L. Renfro testified before the House Subcommittee on Government Operations at a hearing on mail theft and crime.

In his opening remarks, President Renfro set the tone with a clear message. “To protect America’s mail, we must start with protecting the people who deliver it,” he said.

While once rare, Renfro explained that these crimes and assaults have been on the rise in recent years. He urged Congress to pass the bipartisan Protect Our Letter Carriers Act (H.R. 1065/S. 463), referencing the five letter carriers who have been tragically murdered on the job in the last few years, the thousands of other letter carriers who have been victims of crime, and the alarmingly low conviction rates for these cases.

Regarding the Postal Service’s Project Safe Delivery plan, Renfro said NALC supported the initiative and the work of the Postal Inspection Service, but that “the scope of the problem has severely outgrown their capacity to protect us.”

“We can’t wait for another letter carrier to be murdered or more violent federal crimes against civil servants who serve the American people every day to decide it’s finally time for legislative action. The time is now,” he said.

Renfro reminded the subcommittee that this is “not a partisan or political issue” or “a finger-pointing exercise or blame game.”

“It is a problem that everyone should recognize and be 100 percent behind addressing. No one wants violent crime in their neighborhood,” he added.

Renfro emphasized that protecting letter carriers must be a top priority. “Letter carriers want nothing more than to serve our people, but we must be protected. And the people that commit these crimes must be arrested, prosecuted, convicted and sentenced.”

The subcommittee also included witnesses Brendan Donahue, inspector in charge at the U.S. Postal Inspection Service; Julius Rothstein, deputy inspector general at the U.S. Postal Service Office of the Inspector General; Frank Albergo, president of the Postal Police Officers Association; and Anthony Holloway, chief of police at the St. Petersburg, FL, Police Department.

Overall, questions focused on types of mail theft, what is driving an increase in these crimes, the role of postal police officers, Project Safe Delivery, and what more can be done to protect mail and postal employees.

In his opening remarks, Chairman Pete Sessions (R-TX) recognized that criminals have increasingly targeted letter carriers, referencing an 845 percent increase in letter carrier robberies from 2019 to 2023.

In his questioning, Ranking Member Kweisi Mfume (D-MD) emphasized that mail theft is about more than data. “It’s also about human beings who are on the other side of the equation. We refer to them as letter carriers. They work day in and day out to make sure that the service that we’ve come to take for granted is still there,” he said.

Ranking Member Mfume then asked Renfro how the current postal lock and key system works. Renfro explained the issues with the current method, referenced the Postal Service’s modernization efforts, and explained that passing the bipartisan Protect Our Letter Carriers Act is the most efficient way to modernize all postal locks and keys.

President Renfro’s full testimony is available on nalc.org.

Anti-privatization resolution reaches bipartisan majority in House

On July 17, H.Res. 70 reached a bipartisan majority in the House with 218 representatives—202 Democrats and 16 Republicans—co-sponsoring. The resolution calls on Congress to take all appropriate measures to ensure the Postal Service remains an independent agency of the federal government and not subject to privatization.

“Reaching a House majority sends a clear message that any privatization proposal would be dead on arrival in Congress,” NALC President Brian L. Renfro said. “This milestone comes at a critical time, only a few days after the new postmaster general started his tenure.

“This majority threshold should remind the administration, private shippers, and members of Congress who have not yet signed on that Americans have no appetite for privatization. They trust the Postal Service and their letter carriers. They want the agency to succeed. That starts with ensuring USPS remains an independent, non-taxpayer-funded, nonpartisan agency.”

While we celebrate this achievement, there is still work to do to increase House co-sponsors and reach majority support for the Senate companion resolution, S.Res. 147. Go to nalc.org to take action.

“Letter carriers should be proud of their hard work to reach majority support in the House,” President Renfro said. “Let’s work together to continue that effort in the Senate and keep fighting like hell to reach a majority in both chambers.”

Pay table changes implemented July 12; back pay still on track for Aug. 29 paycheck

The Postal Service has informed NALC that the eliminations of Table 2 Steps AA and A were completed and put into effect on July 12, 2025 (PP 16-2025). In conjunction with the elimination of Steps AA and A, all city carriers in those steps were advanced to Step B and began a new 46-week waiting period to be completed before advancing to the next step.

USPS has also confirmed that back-pay calculations are still ongoing, and payments are expected to be seen in the Aug. 29 paycheck. The retroactive pay will include Nov. 18, 2023, and Nov. 16, 2024, general wage increases (plus the 1 percent additional increases for city carrier assistants on those dates) and the first four cost-of-living adjustments for career carriers.

National ruling on the National Agency Check with Inquiries arbitration

National Arbitrator Margo R. Newman has ruled that non-probationary postal employees separated due to unfavorable background check results are entitled to due process and may challenge their removals through the grievance and arbitration procedure.

On Dec. 12, 2024, NALC joined the APWU, NPMHU and NRLCA in a national-level arbitration concerning employees who had been separated after completing probation due to an unfavorable National Agency Check with Inquiries (NACI) background check. The background checks are conducted by the Postal Inspection Service (PIS) and are standard for all newly hired postal employees.

The dispute escalated to the interpretive step after management argued that the separations were “administrative” and not subject to arbitration, claiming they were based on failure to meet a condition of employment rather than disciplinary action. However, the unions contended that once an employee completes probation, they are entitled to the full protection of the collective-bargaining agreement, including the right to challenge terminations.

Arbitrator Newman rejected the Postal Service’s claim that the separations were outside the scope of the contract, noting that the National Agreement does not exclude such disputes from arbitration. She emphasized that the only explicit exclusion from grievance applies to probationary employees. In addition, Arbitrator Newman maintained that the Postal Service must prove it had just cause for the separation, as required by Article 16 of the National Agreement.