



## Food drive hailed in communities

On May 11, letter carriers in virtually every community across the country shouldered the load by collecting food donations left by customers as part of the Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive. The food helps the hungry in those communities, with donations delivered by NALC members to local food banks.

Since NALC's first national food drive in 1993, active and retired letter carriers, with the help of volunteers, have collected a total of 1.9 billion pounds of food leading up to this year's drive. While the total for this year won't be announced until the July issue of *The Postal Record*, preliminary results pointed to another great year.

"Letter carriers showed up again for their communities and helped ensure that the needs of the hungry are met in every city and town in the United States," NALC President Brian L. Renfroe said.

One in 8 Americans, including millions of children, senior citizens and veterans, are unsure where their next meal will come from. The May food drive helps to relieve shortages that food pantries experience in spring and summer after holiday donations have been depleted. And when summer arrives, most school meal programs are not available, so the need for food grows.

"This food drive comes at a critical time for your food bank, as our shelves are quite depleted heading into the summer months when we know the demand for food assistance will be high," said Mike Manning, the president and CEO of the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank in Louisiana.

"When school lets out, those meals that they count on for breakfast and lunch, if they're part of that program, they're not able to get that meal when they're at school," said Sonya Warwick of Roadrunner Food Bank in Albuquerque, NM. "We're just so honored that the community continues to raise their hand and participate and do this event. These donations mean a tremendous amount of help to people who need that additional assistance right now."

In the days following the food drive, reports from branches and media outlets again demonstrated the dedication from postal employees and their customers to help alleviate hunger—and also showed that food banks and the people they serve appreciated their efforts.

"We've been doing this for 32 years, the National Association of Letter Carriers," said Honolulu, HI Branch 4682's Adele Yoshikawa. "We always tell people we do more than just deliver the mail."

"They see the neighborhoods, they see the need," Jane McLaughlin, volunteer program manager for The Idaho Foodbank in Boise said of letter carriers. "They also see the appreciation of people that are giving food to us."

"Letter carriers see firsthand the communities that are struggling when we walk the streets and deliver the mail," Corpus Christi, TX Branch 1259 President Juan Munoz said. "Most people donate at Christmas, Thanksgiving—the normal times. Right now, the food banks are starting to run low. This is a good way for us to replenish the food banks right when they need it most."

"This food drive is so important," said Middlebury [IN] Food Pantry Executive Director Pam Bingaman. "The shelves have gotten a little bare. We didn't have quite as much money to buy food."

"We get a ton of food, and it helps thousands of families in Kentucky fight food insecurity," said Hanna Martin, volunteer and food drive coordinator for God's Pantry Food Bank in Salem, IL. "It supports our pantries here."

"We're definitely seeing an increase of need over the past year, just with the state of the economy, everybody is feeling the need for assistance," said Brensy Thompson with Metropolitan Ministries in Tampa, FL. "It's not just single people. We're seeing people in two-parent homes coming to us who are needing assistance, an increase in seniors who are on a fixed income who are needing assistance, and so these donations really help us be able to serve those in the Tampa Bay area."

The annual food drive wouldn't be possible without the support of our national partners: the U.S. Postal Service, the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association, Vericast, United Way Worldwide, the AFL-CIO, Valpak, Kellanova and CVS Health. These partners help through such actions as paying for the specially marked postcards, donating thousands of pounds of food and thousands of dollars to food pantries, donating bags that letter carriers distribute to customers, gathering volunteers, or getting out the message about the food drive.

Branches were asked to report their food drive totals to Headquarters by June 7.



Wichita, KS Br. 201



Glendale, CA Br. 2200

## Senate introduces Protect Our Letter Carriers Act (S. 4356)



Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) Sen. Josh Hawley (R-MO)



Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) Rep. Greg Landsman (D-OH)

On May 16, Sens. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Josh Hawley (R-MO) introduced the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act (S. 4356) in the Senate, mirroring H.R. 7629.

"NALC appreciates Sen. Gillibrand and Sen. Hawley's leadership in introducing the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act. Every employee has the right to be safe and protected on the job. Our hope is that this legislation will deter these violent crimes and keep letter carriers safe on the job," NALC President Brian L. Renfroe said. "I urge Congress to pass this bill, which would protect the nation's letter carriers who dutifully deliver medications, checks, ballots, packages and other essential mail that all Americans depend on."

"Amid a concerning uptick in postal crime, I'm proud to be introducing this critical bipartisan legislation to protect our mail and those who deliver it," Gillibrand said. "This bill will make long-overdue upgrades to mailboxes around the country to safeguard against the theft of Americans' sensitive information. It will also strengthen penalties for assaulting a postal worker, helping ensure that the hard-working men and women who deliver our mail are not put in harm's way because of their jobs. I look forward to getting this bill passed."

"Postal carriers work day in and day out to fulfill critical needs, like package deliveries, that Americans often take for granted," Hawley said. "The recent uptick in violent assaults against these men and women is unacceptable and inexcusable. Congress should protect our postal workers on the job, and that starts by increasing enforcement of the law for crimes committed against them."

President Renfroe and members of Baltimore Br. 176 raise awareness about the increase of crime against letter carriers.



## Carriers rally in Florida, Maryland

"Since 2020, we've seen about a 300 percent annual increase in the number of violent crimes. Typically, the robberies are people trying to gain access to the mail," NALC President Brian L. Renfroe told a crowd of letter carriers, residents and community leaders gathered at a park in Port St. Lucie, FL. "The majority of these attacks involve some kind of weapon, often a gun, leaving our brothers and sisters shaken and fearful to simply do their job. This problem is growing across the entire country, including here in the state of Florida."

The rally was held by West Palm Beach Branch 1690 on April 28, one of two rallies held by NALC branches at the end of April.

"At our branch alone, we've had 12 letter carriers robbed and one sexually assaulted in the last couple of years," Branch 1690 President Jeff Wagner said. "A lot of carriers are looking over their shoulders. I know a lot of them personally that were robbed at gunpoint. They're not the same. They're afraid; they can't sleep at night."

Branch 1690 carrier Delvin Ramos told of his experience being robbed on his route in November 2017.

"I go drop off the mail and then when I come back, down from the house, the car approached me and one of the guys got out and came over. He was wearing a mask," Ramos said. "He pulled out the gun and told me, 'I'm not playing.'"

After the robbery, "I was pretty afraid for my life then," Ramos said. "I never imagined that something like that would happen to me." He said that he's still dealing with the fear and shock.

"It needs to stop," said Marybeth Libel, one of the rural letter carriers who attended the rally. "We are out there for the public. We are out there just doing our job day to day, and there's no reason to be violent."

Two days later, on April 30, dozens of Baltimore, MD Branch 176 members held a rally outside the city's main post office, with rural letter carriers joining in support.

"They're out there doing their jobs, and people out there are pulling guns on them, taking the mail equipment, taking the mail, parcels and packages, and we're fed up. Enough is enough," Branch 176 President Tony Vaughn told the local Fox TV affiliate.

"Nearly every single day, we hear about another letter carrier who is a victim of a violent crime, targeted armed robberies, violence, assault, shooting—and yes, even murder," President Renfroe told the Baltimore attendees. "I'm furious that our members, the very people who walk the streets and serve as the eyes and ears of communities, are the people being targeted for harm."

With the strong media presence at the two rallies, including local ABC, NBC and CBS TV affiliates, the *Baltimore Sun* and other news outlets, both events served to help raise public awareness about crimes against letter carriers and the need to pass H.R. 7629/S. 4356.

On the day the House bill was announced, President Renfroe said, "Today we are here to send a very clear message: Enough is enough."

"The next step is critical, and that next step is federal legislation that will deter these attacks from happening, prosecute every criminal who attacks one of our members, and protect letter carriers while doing their jobs," Renfroe said.

This bipartisan legislation would provide \$7 billion in funding for the Postal Service to secure its infrastructure. Additionally, the legislation would increase federal prosecution rates for these crimes by requiring the U.S. attorney general to designate an assistant U.S. attorney in each judicial district to prioritize cases involving an assault or other crime against a letter carrier. Their principal responsibility in the district would be to coordinate and supervise the investigation and prosecution of these crimes.

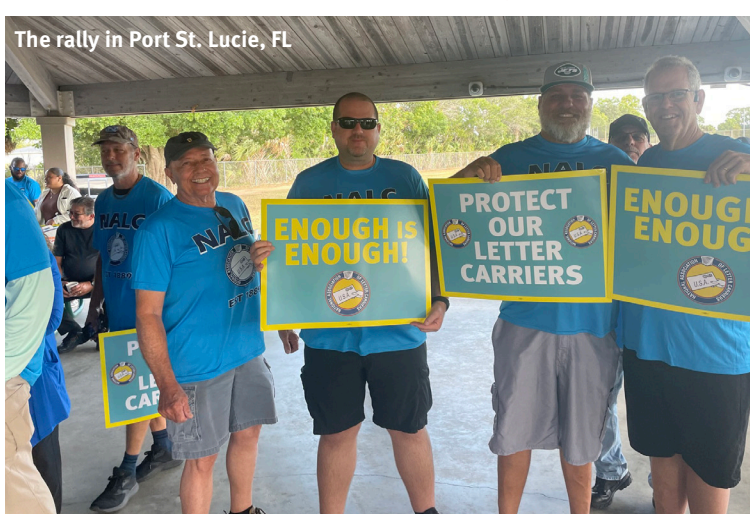
The bill also would strengthen sentencing guidelines for these crimes, ensuring that they are treated in the same manner as assaults on federal law enforcement officers.

Renfroe called on NALC members to urge their House members to become co-sponsors of H.R. 7629 and senators to become co-sponsors of S. 4356. He encouraged letter carriers to ask supporters within their communities to do the same.

One goal is to surpass 290 co-sponsors to force the bill to be considered on the House floor. As of May 23, there were 75 House co-sponsors.

President Renfroe said that passing the bill is NALC's legislative priority. Go to [nalc.org/action](http://nalc.org/action) to learn more.

The rally in Baltimore, MD



The rally in Port St. Lucie, FL

## Convention news and deadlines

Several deadlines are approaching for the 73rd Biennial National Convention Aug. 5-9 in Boston.

Delegate eligibility lists for the convention have been provided to every branch. The lists must be completed and returned to the office of Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine at NALC Headquarters no later than June 5 for branch representatives to be registered as convention delegates.

All proposed amendments to the *NALC Constitution* to be submitted for consideration at the convention must be received by Rhine's office by June 5 as well. That date is 60 days in advance of the convention, as prescribed by the *NALC Constitution*. Proposed amendments will appear in July's *Postal Record* for members to review.

Resolutions to be considered by convention delegates also must be received by the June 5 deadline to be printed in the *Resolutions and Amendments* book provided to delegates. Resolutions received after June 5 still may be considered at the convention.

Branches wishing to sell items in the designated branch sales area during the convention must contact Rhine's office to secure guidelines and forms. The completed forms must be returned to Headquarters by June 5 as well.

### Accommodations for disabled attendees

Attendees at the convention who might require assistance due to a disability can avail themselves of the following accommodations in adherence with the Americans with Disabilities Act. If delegates with disabilities need special accommodation beyond what is mentioned here, contact the secretary-treasurer's office at NALC Headquarters.

**Accommodations for deaf or hard of hearing delegates:** General session video presentations, including podium and floor action, will be open-captioned so that deaf or hard of hearing delegates can sit with their delegations.

**Accessible equipment rental:** Electric mobility scooters and wheelchairs are available for rent from Scootaround. For reservations or for more information, call 888-441-7575 or go to [scootaround.com/en/nalc-73rd-biennial-national-convention](http://scootaround.com/en/nalc-73rd-biennial-national-convention).

**Parking:** Accessible parking for people with disabilities is available in the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center (BCEC) South Parking Lot, located at the south end of the facility. The lot is linked to the facility via an accessible pedestrian pathway. Overnight parking is prohibited.

**Shuttles:** NALC is providing free shuttle bus service to/from the BCEC for hotels within the NALC block that are not within walking distance. A complete list will be available at a later date. Vehicles equipped with a wheelchair lift will be made available during all convention hours on an on-call basis. Requests for use of this service can be made directly by calling the operations manager on-site. The number will be listed on bus flyers available at all hotels where shuttle service is provided.

### Airfare discount

Delta Air Lines is offering special discounts for NALC members traveling to Boston for the convention. To see if the discounts apply to you, call Delta Meeting Network at 800-328-1111 and refer to meeting event code NY38N. You also can insert the meeting event code on Delta's website to search for a flight.

### Baseball tickets

NALC will not be hosting a baseball night during the Boston convention. However, the Boston Red Sox will be playing a home game at Fenway Park on the evening of Friday, Aug. 9, against the Houston Astros.

The Red Sox are making tickets available for convention delegates who are choosing to stay that evening. The tickets will be for seats in the same section and at a reduced rate. Delegates who wish to purchase tickets can do so at [fevo-enterprise.com/NALC2024](http://fevo-enterprise.com/NALC2024). The offer is good through June 12.

### Veterans Group

The NALC Veterans Group will host a booth at the Boston national convention. Starting May 1, the following link will be active to donate: [p2p.onecause.com/nechvlettercarriers](http://p2p.onecause.com/nechvlettercarriers). Monetary donations will provide vital support to veterans via the New England Center and Home for Veterans.

Contact Assistant to the President for Community Services Christina Vela Davidson at 202-662-2489 or [cdavidson@nalc.org](mailto:cdavidson@nalc.org) with any questions.

Go to [nalc.org/convention](http://nalc.org/convention) for more convention news.



August 5-9, 2024 | Boston Convention & Exhibition Center

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