

Our role in strengthening democracy



**Brian L.
Renfro**

The members of NALC provide an invaluable service. We deliver essential mail and packages to every address in the country. We also are lifelines for those who are homebound, and we serve as trusted eyes and ears in each of our communities. Americans rely on their letter carriers.

In the last few election cycles, more Americans have started depending on us for another essential service—safely and securely delivering and collecting their ballots.

According to the Postal Service's post-election analysis, in the 2020 general election, USPS processed and delivered 135

million ballots, with 99.89 percent of them reaching election officials within a week. In the 2022 midterm elections, 105.4 million ballots were processed and delivered, with 99.93 ballots delivered to election officials within seven days. (While turnout is typically much lower for the midterms than in presidential elections, the small decrease from 2020 to 2022 highlights the exponential increase in use of mail ballots in some states during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.)

In 2020, we asked the Postal Service to establish a joint task force with us to prepare for election mail. Postmaster General Louis DeJoy, who was only a few weeks into the job at that point, agreed. The task force played a crucial role not just in the Postal Service's success in that election cycle, but in the country's success. Measures were developed that allowed us to handle and prioritize the dramatic increase in election mail in 2020.

The task force was reestablished in 2022 and the success of 2020 was replicated. Now, in 2024, we have reconvened the group and have been meeting to ensure that we are successful this election season. This past—and projected future—success is a direct result of the dedicated work of letter carriers and all postal employees.

Despite our stellar record of delivering votes by mail, some who are misinformed have cast doubt on the Postal Service's ability to successfully fulfill our role in vote-by-mail elections. These opinions are misguided and, frankly, wrong. The facts are that we have successfully handled election mail for many years in some states and have the

capacity to easily handle it for every single voter in the country. We know that our network is unmatched, and the statistics do not lie. As we head into another election season that could produce record vote-by-mail ballots, we will again surpass expectations and deliver Americans' votes.

Letter carriers should be very proud of the work we do to fuel our democratic process. Our success in the last two election cycles has proven that voting by mail is convenient, efficient, popular and, most importantly, safe and secure. Voting is the bedrock of our democracy, and we make it possible for tens of millions of people. But the critical work we do is just one way we should participate in our democratic system.

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Now more than ever, it is important to participate in our democracy by voting. Whether you plan to vote early, by mail, or on Election Day, I urge you to make a plan now to vote. Talk to your family and friends. Make sure they are registered and have a plan to cast their vote, too. Voting is the most important and fundamental way to participate in our democracy.

No one knows what the outcome of this year's elections will be. Pollsters and pundits seem to change their predictions every day, and we all have recently observed notable events in this year's election campaigns. Regardless of whom you choose to support, familiarize yourself with the candidates on the ballot. Know where they stand on NALC's priorities and on other issues that are important to you.

The last few years have proved that our democracy is not guaranteed. Some states have passed measures making it more difficult for people to vote, which is antithetical to our democratic system. The violent effort to interfere with the transfer of power at the highest level in 2021 reminded us that U.S. democracy is not automatic. We must nurture and fight for it. By definition, a democracy is a government that is by the people and for the people. Our democracy is the healthiest when the people make their voices heard, and we do that through exercising our most basic right as Americans—voting.