



News from Washington

Senate introduces anti-privatization resolution

On March 27, Sens. Gary Peters (D-MI) and Dan Sullivan (R-AK) introduced a Senate resolution (S.Res.147) that calls on Congress to take all appropriate measures to ensure that the Postal Service remains an independent establishment of the federal government and is not subject to privatization.

Four senators joined the bipartisan leads as co-sponsors: Sens. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Susan Collins (R-ME), Thom Tillis (R-NC) and Maggie Hassan (D-NH).

The Senate version is identical to the House version (H.Res. 70), which was introduced by Reps. Stephen Lynch (D-MA) and Nick LaLota (R-NY) in January and currently has 190 co-sponsors.

“Letter carriers take great pride in the work they do, providing universal service to every address in the nation,” NALC President Brian L. Renfroe said. “Every member of Congress represents constituents who depend on the Postal Service. I urge every representative to sign on to this resolution.”

Visit nalc.org/action to ask your members of Congress to co-sponsor H.Res. 70/S.Res. 147.

DeJoy’s exit and DOGE at USPS

On March 24, Postmaster General Louis DeJoy announced his resignation, effective that day.

Upon DeJoy’s resignation, Deputy Postmaster General Doug Tulino, a 41-year veteran of the Postal Service, was appointed acting postmaster general. Tulino previously served as the vice president of labor relations for 15 years. In this role, he was responsible for overseeing contract negotiations

as well as collective bargaining and grievance management, while cultivating positive relationships between USPS management and unions.

As this issue was going to print, the Postal Service Board of Governors was searching for a new postmaster general. President Renfroe emphasized that the new leader must continue modernizing postal infrastructure, work in collaboration with NALC and other postal unions, and advocate for necessary retirement fund and accounting policy changes in Congress. The new leader should also have a strong belief in USPS as a public service and in its role of providing universal service to the American public.

NALC has pledged to collaborate with the new postmaster general to ensure that the perspectives of letter carriers are prioritized.

With the leadership of the Postal Service in transition, the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), tasked with scouring federal agencies for possible waste, fraud or abuse, arrived on site at USPS in early March. At the time this publication was going to print, the DOGE team was digging into departments searching for “efficiencies.” DOGE has reportedly focused on real estate contracts, and has had meetings with various departments at USPS.

In a letter to Congress prior to his departure, DeJoy laid out areas of concern that DOGE can and should prioritize, including OPM’s calculation of Postal Service pension liabilities, which have cost the agency tens of billions of dollars. Also outlined was a new investment strategy for USPS’s three retirement funds, which

are currently held in Treasury bonds, missing out on billions in annual returns.

“These policy changes are needed to improve the Postal Service’s financial viability, and we welcome anyone’s help who can influence Congress and the administration to finally enact them,” Renfroe said in a statement following DeJoy’s agreement with DOGE.

NALC continues to engage the administration and Congress to enact these critical policies and will closely monitor DOGE’s engagement with the Postal Service.

Federal workforce attacks begin

So far, 2025 has been filled with actions that have negatively affected federal employees.

On March 25, the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability held a nine-hour markup and advanced several anti-federal work bills. Two bills would directly affect the Postal Service and its employees: the Paycheck Protection Act (H.R. 2174) and the FEHB Protection Act of 2025 (H.R. 2193).

The Paycheck Protection Act (H.R. 2174) would prohibit automatic deductions for labor organization dues and political contributions from the paychecks of federal employees. This bill would apply to all federal agencies, including the Postal Service, requiring all federal employees to manually submit payments for union dues and political contributions.

The FEHB Protection Act of 2025 (H.R. 2193) introduces new requirements to verify the eligibility of family members added to the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program. If passed, employees could

be required to submit documentation to avoid being disenrolled from the program.

Other bills that would not directly affect letter carriers but would harm other federal employees include:

- The Reorganizing Government Act of 2025 (H.R. 1295) empowers the president to restructure and reorganize the federal government under the executive branch. The bill aims to reduce the federal workforce and to cap the creation of new positions.
- The Protecting Taxpayers' Wallets Act of 2025 (H.R. 1210) requires labor organizations to compensate federal agencies for resources and official time. Non-payment results in interest charges, penalties and potential loss of union time and resources, with the threat of decertification for non-payment.
- The Preserving Presidential Management Authority Act (H.R. 2249) provides the president with the power to negotiate and modify existing collective-bargaining agreements, and to terminate any provisions that conflict with presidential orders or policies. The legislation expands the executive branch's influence over labor negotiations and employee relations.

Given the narrow margins between House Republicans and Democrats (220-213), NALC does not anticipate that any of these bills will make it to the House floor. The above bills are a sample of the numerous bills and policy proposals floating in Congress. In addition, as Congress heads into the budget reconciliation process under single-party control, House and Senate

committees will be tasked with making drastic budget cuts. As we have seen in the past, some lawmakers have suggested increasing the amount letter carriers and other federal employees contribute to their Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) pensions without increasing the benefits, altering their FERS retirement calculation, or even eliminating FERS altogether. NALC fully opposes any changes to FERS and will do everything in our power to keep it protected in the ongoing reconciliation process.

NALC members must be ready to take action on Capitol Hill as the process unfolds. Be sure to check our Legislative Action Center and sign up for push notifications for alerts and updates.

The anti-federal worker attacks have not just come from Capitol Hill. On March 28, President Trump signed an executive order stripping the right to collectively bargain from hundreds of thousands of federal workers at more than 30 agencies. The order provides exemptions for certain agencies with representation that has been cooperative or politically supportive of the president.

The executive order stated, "President Trump supports constructive partnerships with unions who work with him; he will not tolerate mass obstruction that jeopardizes his ability to manage agencies with vital national security missions."

"This is a strategic retaliation by the administration to eliminate job protections for certain federal employees," NALC President Renfroe said. "We stand in solidarity with our federal employee unions, recognizing that collective bargaining is a fundamental

right. Workplace negotiations are only fair and efficient when workers and employers have power at the bargaining table and incentives to compromise. The public benefits from unions' actions to improve job quality because higher standards and strong labor-management partnerships help to attract and retain well-qualified workers and train the next generation of public servants. We will fight tirelessly to defend all public servants who provide vital services to Americans."

Stalled heat safety rule in jeopardy at DOL

Last year, under the Biden administration, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration proposed a rule aimed at preventing heat injury and illness, marking the first-ever U.S. safety standard on heat hazards. This proposal, which followed recommendations from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, was designed to protect workers from the dangers of excessive heat. However, the proposed rule has been paused indefinitely.

New Secretary of Labor Lori Chavez-DeRemer will play a crucial role in advancing critical heat safety regulations and supporting the services that injured letter carriers depend on. Following her confirmation, President Renfroe had a productive meeting with Secretary Chavez-DeRemer, where he made it clear that the implementation of the heat safety rule remains NALC's top priority with the Department of Labor (DOL).

The proposed rule outlines essential steps to ensure worker safety, including identifying heat hazards; establishing emergency response plans;

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training supervisors; and setting work standards for breaks, access to shade and water, and heat acclimatization for new employees. This comprehensive approach is vital to providing all workers exposed to extreme heat—particularly letter carriers—with the protection they need on the job.

Some in Congress are urging the DOL to throw out the proposed rule, a direct and dangerous threat to our members' safety. In fact, House Committee on Education and Workforce Chairman Tim Wahlberg (R-MN) issued a letter to DOL calling for the rule to be rescinded entirely.

NALC will continue to fight like hell to ensure that letter carriers and other workers are safeguarded from the dangers of extreme heat. The implementation of the heat safety rule is our unwavering priority, and we look forward to the Department of Labor's continued efforts to address this critical issue.

Executive order issued limiting ballot access

On March 25, the White House issued an executive order (EO) aimed at voter restrictions, with serious implications to vote-by-mail. The order criticizes the widespread use of mail-in voting, and it mandates that all ballots be cast and received by Election Day.

"Our country is stronger when more people participate in the democratic process, no matter how they choose to cast their ballots—early, in person on Election Day, or through mail-in ballots," President Renfroe said in a statement. "While this EO claims to be about 'preserving' and 'protecting' American elections, NALC sees this for what it is: a clear attack on voting

rights that slams the safety and security of voting by mail."

NALC will not stand for any attempt to diminish Americans' accessibility to free and fair elections, and we will fight like hell to protect this right for the millions of Americans who rely on us.

Equal COLA Act reintroduced in House and Senate

Earlier this Congress, the Equal COLA Act (H.R.491/S.624) was reintroduced in both the House and Senate by Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-VA) and Sen. Alex Padilla (D-CA), respectively.

The legislation would ensure that all federal retirees, regardless of their retirement system, receive the same full cost-of-living adjustment (COLA).

Under current law, federal employees under FERS receive a limited COLA increase when inflation exceeds 2 percent, while employees under the Civilian Service Retirement System (CSRS) receive full COLA adjustments based on the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers. This bill aims to address the disparity in COLAs between federal retirement systems.

This legislation is particularly important given the 2.5 percent COLA increase announced by the Social Security Administration for 2025, where CSRS retirees will receive the full increase, while FERS retirees will get only a 2 percent boost. The Equal COLA Act would eliminate this disparity and ensure fair treatment for all federal employees. NALC fully supports this legislation and encourages NALC members to ask their members of Congress in both chambers to co-sponsor this important legislation.

PRO Act reintroduced

Last month, the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act (H.R. 20/S. 852) was reintroduced in Congress. Reps. Bobby Scott (D-VA) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) introduced the bill in the House, and Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) introduced the legislation in the Senate.

The PRO Act would strengthen protections under the National Labor Relations Act, ensuring workers the right to organize and collectively bargain for better wages, benefits and working conditions.

"NALC is fortunate to be an open shop with more than 93 percent of letter carriers choosing to be members of our union," President Renfroe said. "We do not take our right to organize for granted. We know that our country is stronger when workers are empowered and protected through unions. NALC fully supports the PRO Act, which would make it easier for every worker to form and join a union, and urges Congress to pass this bill."

As this magazine was going to print, the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act was scheduled to be reintroduced. That legislation would guarantee other public-sector employees' rights to organize and to collectively bargain in states that do not afford these protections. Currently, no federal law protects the freedom of public-sector workers to join a union.

With so much activity in Congress, we encourage all members to check the "Government Affairs" section of nalc.org for updates and be on the lookout for calls to action in the coming weeks and months. **PR**