

Letter carriers in action

The last several weeks have been filled with anticipation, uncertainty and, most importantly, a fight for NALC members and everyone who cares about the Postal Service.

On Feb. 20, national media outlets started reporting that the White House was planning to issue an executive order that would restructure the Postal Service, ultimately jeopardizing its future as a self-sufficient public agency.

Immediately, letter carriers banded together to do what we do best—fight for our jobs and our futures.

The reports framed this executive order as imminent, and it was expected to be signed as early as the following day. NALC quickly put out a call to action and, as always, letter carriers delivered.

On Feb. 21, NALC members called House Speaker Mike Johnson’s (R-LA) phone line (which was eventually shut down due to call volume) to urge him to call the White House and put a stop to this executive order. While the threat still exists, that day we were victorious. Thanks to letter carriers’ persistent calls, the speaker contacted the White House, and no executive order was released.

This digital day of action was only the beginning. Less than 72 hours later, NALC organized and hosted a rally in Washington, DC, to say “Hell no!” to dismantling the Postal Service.

On Feb. 24, hundreds of NALC members from across the country, labor leaders and union members attended this event on Capitol grounds.

“I want to be very clear. This is a direct attack on 640,000 Postal Service employees, the universal service we provide, and every citizen who relies on the Postal Service,” NALC President Brian L. Renfroe told the crowd.

“This isn’t about politics. Regardless of how they voted last year, I can guarantee they did not vote for destroying one of our nation’s oldest and most beloved institutions—the United States Postal Service.

“Here today, with all our supporters and friends, when they try to dismantle the Postal Service, what do we say?” The crowd responded with a resounding “Hell no!”

Speakers included House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Ranking Member Gerry Connolly (D-VA), AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Fred Redmond, American Postal Workers Union (APWU) President Mark Dimondstein, AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department (TTD) President Greg Regan, Communications Workers of America (CWA) President Claude Cummings, Rep. Eric Sorensen (D-IL), Union Veterans Council Executive Director Will Attig, Letters to a Pre-Scientist CEO Lucy Madden, American Guild of Musical Artists Soloist Vice President Andrew Stenson, Association of Flight Attendants-CWA President Sara Nelson, American



President Renfroe addresses the attendees at the Feb. 24 rally.

Federation of Government Employees Vice President Ottis Johnson, Amalgamated Transit Union President John Costa, and Reps. Eric Sorensen (D-IL) and Jill Tokuda (D-HI).

With a successful national event in the rearview mirror, the fight was only beginning.

Two days later, NALC organized another digital day of action, encouraging every letter carrier to contact the White House directly with a clear message: Hands off the Postal Service!

Plans are well underway for local rallies on March 23. Branches, state associations and regions will hold rallies nationwide to bring awareness to everything that is at stake if the Postal Service is restructured or privatized.

“These local rallies nationwide will bring together NALC members and the public to show their support for letter carriers, all postal employees, and the Postal Service,” President Renfroe said. “At a crucial time, this is an opportunity to educate our customers about everything at stake if the Postal Service is privatized or restructured.

“Our jobs, our service, and the entire Postal Service are on the line. We need everyone’s help in our fight like hell against these attacks.

Following the March 23 day of action, NALC will host another event in Washington, DC, on March 25 to keep up the momentum. NALC state association presidents will convene at NALC Headquarters to plan for what’s



President Renfroe and other labor leaders at the rally at NALC Headquarters



ahead and then rally together with NALC members, other union members, and our supporters.

As this magazine was going to print, no executive order regarding the Postal Service had been issued, but letter carriers know that this fight is far from over. The threat is still looming, and NALC will continue activating our members to stand up for our jobs, our customers, and a strong, public Postal Service.

NALC members hit Capitol Hill

With all the action happening and everything that is in play, NALC state delegations have continued their regularly scheduled lobbying trips to Washington, DC. While we do lots of important work on Capitol Hill every single day, nothing compares to a member of Congress putting a face to the critical service letter carriers provide in their district and state.

In these meetings, NALC members from various states have focused on increasing co-sponsors for our priority legislation. While many members of Congress want to get involved in the fight for the Postal Service, at this time, the most helpful action they can take is co-sponsoring our anti-privatization reso-

lution (H.Res. 70). Increasing co-sponsors for this, the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act (H.R. 1065/S. 463), and the Federal Retirement Fairness Act (H.R. 1522) have been the goal of these meetings.

Regardless of the threats coming our way, we cannot forget about these fights or lose sight of how Congress can most help us, which is to pass our priority legislation.

What we're fighting for

Before the news broke of the administration's potential plans to restructure USPS, NALC was prepared to fight like hell against this on all fronts.

We launched our "Fight Like Hell" campaign with an event at NALC Headquarters on Feb. 13, where President Renfroe outlined the ongoing major battles NALC is fighting:

- Against any efforts to privatize the Postal Service
- For a better contract with a higher general wage increase
- In defense of the retirement and health care benefits letter carriers have earned
- For safety and protection on the job, including an end to the assaults and robberies targeting letter

carriers on their routes and national standards related to extreme weather

- For fair retirement for all letter carriers, including those who spent time in a non-career position, by passing the Federal Retirement Fairness Act

"There are a lot of people trying to knock us down," Renfroe said. "Whether it's Postal Service manage-

ment, ill-intentioned lawmakers on Capitol Hill, criminals targeting us on the streets or at our stations, or anyone else who tries to attack us and what we've earned, we are ready to fight!"

"Everyone who is against us doesn't know who they're dealing with, but they're about to find out. Because one thing is clear here today—we're fighting like hell!" Renfroe added.

That message was amplified by several media outlets that covered the event, including the local ABC TV affiliate.

At this event, NALC again had broad support from our labor family. AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler, APWU President Dimondstein, TTD President Regan, National Rural Letter Carriers' Association President Don Maston, National Postal Mail Handlers Union President Paul Hogrogian, International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers President Matt Biggs, and AFA-CWA President Nelson also spoke at the kickoff.

Looking forward

Whether we're saying "fight like hell" or "hell no," one thing is clear: NALC members are fired up and not backing down. Our union is strong because our members are strong. Now is the time to tap into that strength and put everything we have into the fights ahead.

Local rallies on March 23 and another Washington, DC, event on March 25 are only the next two actions on the horizon. More is certain to come, and we need every NALC member's help in every fight.

Check nalc.org and future issues of *The Postal Record* for more information on how to get involved. **PR**



Letter carriers met with their representatives on Capitol Hill, including Rep. Jim Costa (CA-21) at left and Sen. Jacky Rosen (D-NV) below.

