NALC Convention
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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS
NALC 73RD BIENNIAL CONVENTION BOSTON • AUGUST 2024
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Covering the fourth session:
Thursday, Aug. 8, 2024

A democratic union

On the fourth day of the 73rd NALC Biennial Convention, the session began with the continuation of the hearing of Article 10 appeals, which were handled in an orderly manner.

As the session continued, the delegates found common ground in dealing with the issues they face together: stopping the wave of crime against carriers and extending to all Americans the right to vote by mail for any reason.

They rallied behind NALC's priority legislation in Congress to declare "Enough is enough" by pushing for enactment of the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act, and they heard from its two initial sponsors, Reps. Greg Landsman (D-OH) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA).

"My goal is, the next time we gather here, we're going to be celebrating that piece of legislation that is designed to keep you safe," Fitzpatrick told the crowd.

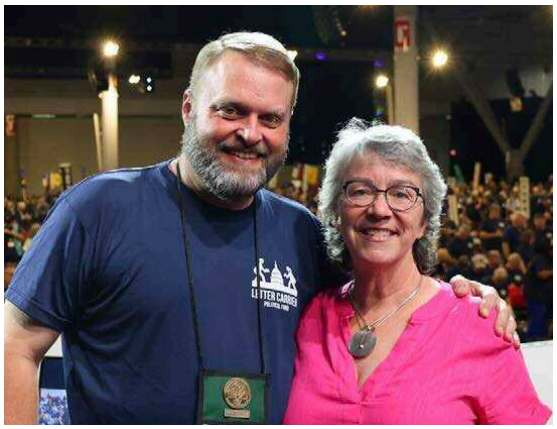
Thursday's session concluded with delegates considering national agreement resolutions.

Call to order

Thursday's session began with Michelle Bjornseth of Bismarck, ND Branch 957 singing an *a cappella* version of the national anthem and Maureen Marinelli of Boston, MA Branch 34 leading the Pledge of Allegiance. Richie McDonough of Reading, PA Branch 258 delivered the invocation.

President Brian L. Renfroe turned the chair over to President Emeritus Fredric V. Rolando to continue the consideration of appeals.

The appeal for Charge 2, Circulating False or Misleading Statements about an NALC Officer, was then heard. Director of City Delivery Christopher Jackson was allowed 20 minutes to present his case to overturn the Executive Council's ruling of not guilty on Charge 2. President Renfroe also received 20 minutes to present his case



President Renfroe thanks Barbara Smith Warner, executive director of the National Vote at Home Institute, for addressing the convention.

Delegates pass the hat to raise money for fallen letter carriers' families.

to uphold the Executive Council's ruling. Each party then had five minutes for rebuttal.

Ultimately, a teller vote of 2,949 to 1,478 upheld the Executive Council's ruling of not guilty.

Jackson had his appeal heard for Charge 4, Abandonment of Position. The teller vote for Charge 4 was 2,674 to 1,712 to uphold the Executive Council's ruling of not guilty.

Garden Grove, CA, Branch 1100 member Charlie Miller had his appeal heard for the penalty the Executive Council imposed for Charge 3, Impaired Driving in an NALC-owned Vehicle. The teller vote for Charge 3 was 2,783 to 1,438 to uphold the Executive Council's penalty.

Back to work

President Renfroe resumed presiding over the convention, beginning with a passing of the hat to collect donations to help the families of brother and sister letter carriers: Aundre Cross of Milwaukee, WI Branch 2; Octavia Redmond of Chicago, IL Branch 11; Jeremy Compton of Ogden, UT Branch 68; Eugene Gates Jr. of Dallas, TX Branch 132; Rod Jester of Eugene, OR Branch 916; and Aaron Welsch of Modesto, CA Branch 1291. Donations were accepted by cash or Venmo.

The president then invited Antonia Shields of Birmingham, AL Branch 530, chairperson of the Mileage and Per Diem Committee, to the lectern along with the other committee members. Shields gave the committee's report, saying that the mileage and per diem grand total is $5,219.85. Chairman of the Board of Trustees Lawrence D. Brown Jr. then affirmed that the board had approved the report. The delegates voted to accept the report.

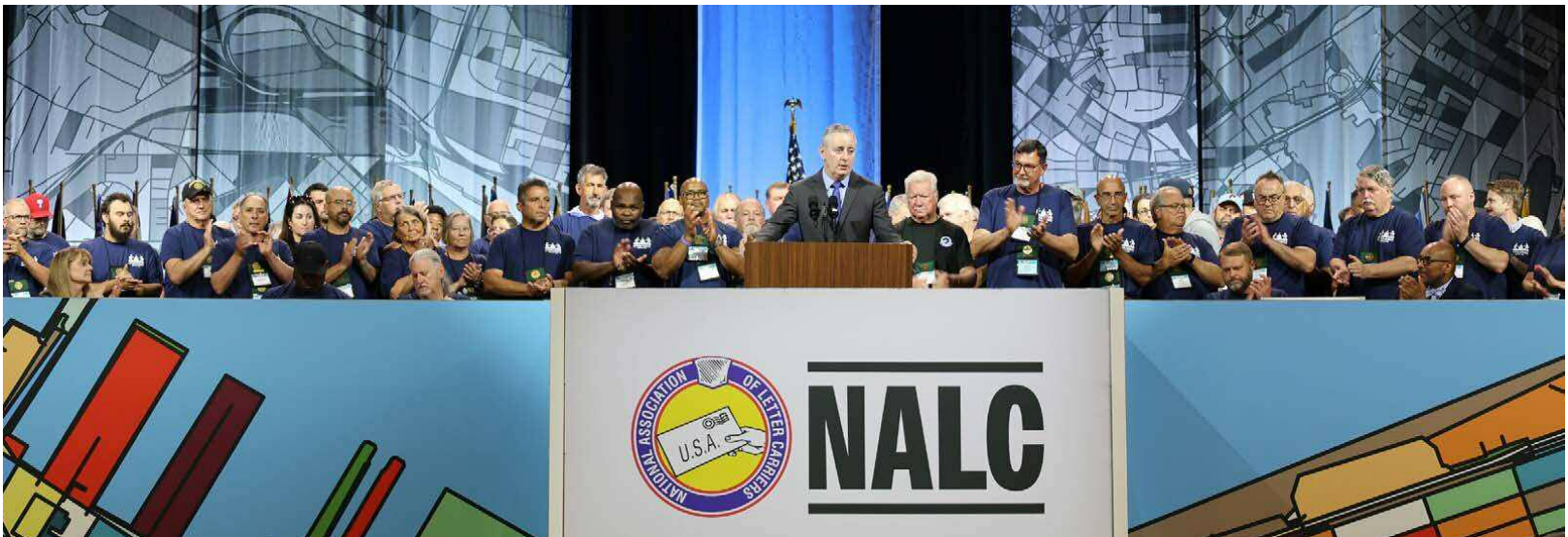
Protect our letter carriers

The convention viewed a video about the increasing threat of crime against letter carriers. Following the video, Renfroe introduced Rep. Greg Landsman (D-OH), who came to the podium alongside the Ohio delegation.

Landsman was an original sponsor of the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act, Renfroe told the delegates. "We knew Congressman Landsman was who we wanted to have on our side," he said. "He didn't hesitate."

Rep. Landsman told the delegates about the key points of the legislation, including designating an assistant federal prosecutor in every district to handle crimes against carriers and

Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA)



Rep. Greg Landsman (D-OH)

adding security boxes and e-keys to replace Arrow Keys. "The sooner we get them to you, the better," he said.

"Beyond making sure that you are safe and getting this bill passed," Landsman added, "we need to build an economy that focuses on you who are on the front lines."

He called for tax reform that would both provide fairness for working folks and allow for more investment in public-sector employees. "The fact is, you all work your [butts] off, and you deserve what you deserve," Landsman said.

"You deserve to be safe, whether you are home or at work. Together, we are going to get this done," he said.

President Renfroe led delegates in a Letter Carrier Cheer for Landsman.

Renfroe then introduced Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) as the author of the Protect Our Letter Carriers legislation. "It was his ideas and vision that helped shape the bill," the NALC president said. "Working together with him and his staff, we landed on a comprehensive common-sense package that deters these crimes from happening. Ultimately, that will help keep letter carriers safe."

After being escorted to the podium by members of the Pennsylvania delegation, Fitzpatrick explained how the NALC leadership reached out to him. "They educated me about this emerging unfortunate trend of violence," he said. "Over the past four years, it's over 2,000 [assaults], and those are the documented cases—the ones we know about."

Fitzpatrick said that he was proud to help enact the Postal Reform Act. "While the postal reform bill deals with financial security, the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act deals with your physical concern and safety," he said. "You're entitled to both."

He called on delegates to return to their home districts to ask their members of Congress to become co-sponsors of the bill.

"My goal is, the next time we gather here, we're going to be celebrating that piece of legislation that is designed to keep you safe," he said. "Because it's not just your financial security, it's your physical security that matters as well."

President Renfroe led delegates in a Letter Carrier Cheer for Fitzpatrick.

A video honoring the life of Lloyd Nash Pearson Jr. of North Florida Branch 53, an NALC member who began his postal career in 1942 and who was active in his branch until his death last year at the age of 102, was shown to the delegation.

Delivering democracy

President Renfroe then welcomed Barbara Smith Warner, executive director of the National Vote at Home Institute, to the lectern.

Warner gave delegates an overview of where voting by mail stands and outlined the work needed to make it possible for every American to vote at home. Currently, 75 percent of voters in 26 states have access to voting by mail for any reason, she said, including eight states and the District of Columbia that automatically mail ballots to all voters.

"The Postal Service and letter carriers in particular are key to delivering democracy," Warner said. "Despite all the B.S. you may hear, voting by mail is safe and secure."

Voting by mail greatly increases voter turnout, without giving an advantage to a particular political party, she said. Allowing voters to cast ballots by mail, she said, "flips the script—you make it all about them. That's what truly strengthens our democracy: giving everyone a voice and a vote."

Warner asked the delegates to return home and do three things to ensure that voting by mail is strengthened.

She urged all carriers to make sure that their stations have an effective process for getting ballots delivered to voters.

She called on carriers in the 26 states that allow no-excuse voting by mail to sign up for this and to urge their community members to sign up.

And she asked carriers in the states where voting by mail is limited to lobby to expand it: "Engage in helping us move the dial to make voting at home more accessible in more states." Resources for activism for voting by mail are available at the Institute's website, voteathome.org.

"Thank you for all you continue to do to really make democracy a reality," Warner said, "by delivering for Americans every day."

The convention rewarded Warner with a Letter Carrier Cheer.

Resolutions

President Renfroe called Secretary-Treasurer Rhine and Vice President James Henry to the stage to resume the discussion of National Agreement resolutions. A resolution dealing with heat safety in bargaining passed.

Rhine then made several announcements. Renfroe told the hall that the general session the following day would be called to order 30 minutes earlier than scheduled, at 7:30 a.m.

The session was then adjourned for the day at about 3:50 p.m.

NALC Auxiliary

Thursday, August 8 —Submitted by Crystal Bragg, NALCA Secretary

The meeting opened with the pledge, the collect, and a prayer by chaplain Tessy Fisher of Aux. #698.

The Bylaws Committee members, Rick Baird of Aux. #202, Daniel Cdebaca of Aux. #698 and Karen Heil of Aux. #47, presented bylaws changes, and Auxiliary members voted on the following:

- Article XI, Section 1—Funds: passed
- Article XVI, Section 3(b)—Duties of Officers: passed
- Article XVI, Section 3(h)—Duties of Officers: passed
- Article XVI, Section 1(i)—Duties of Officers: passed
- Article XVI, Section 2—Duties of Officers: passed
- Article IX, Section 8—Dissolution of a Local Auxiliary: passed

A motion to approve Wednesday's minutes was made and accepted.

The Audit Committee for the next two years is Linda Samples of Aux. #47, George Anna Myers of Aux. #4 and Margaret Castilleja of Aux. #28.

The Bylaws Committee for the next two years is Rick Baird of Aux. #202, Karen Heil of Aux. #47 and Lynn Logen of Aux. #99.

The meeting was then adjourned.