Communities and Postal Workers United

FALL 2026 -- *No Closures! No Cuts! No Delay of Mail!* www.cpwunited.com

Uprising at NALC Convention

Renfroe bails, delegates cheer

by Jamie Partridge, NALC retiree, Portland OR

National Association of Letter Carriers president, Brian Renfroe, who faced criticism over secretive contract negotiations and the eventual imposition of a rejected contract, announced he would not seek reelection, drawing cheers from delegates.

Renfroe's exit set up a four-way presidential race. Nicole Rhine represents the establishment slate, while Mike Caref and the Concerned Letter Carriers slate, led by James Henry, campaigned on reform-oriented platforms emphasizing higher pay, an end to two-tier wages, and addressing the grievance backlog. Lew Drass is the fourth candidate.

It was quite different than any NALC convention that I've been to. And I've been to pretty much every convention since 1988. There were many competing factions and five times as many constitutional amendments as have been offered in the past, and many more resolutions, which I attribute to the uprising against the current leadership.

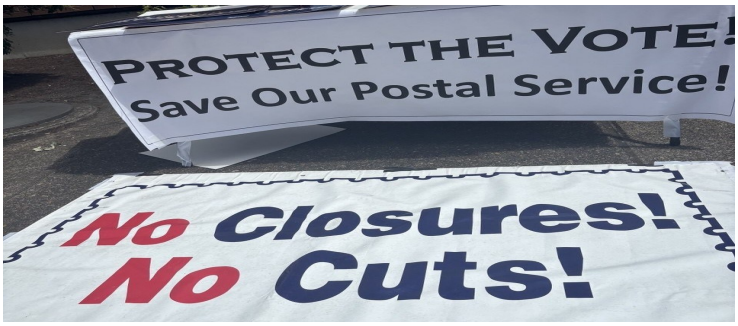
A major unexpected victory for reformers was a resolution supporting locality pay for carriers in high-cost areas. Delegates also approved modest transparency reforms, including livestreaming future conventions and requiring the president to maintain written bargaining records. Many other proposals—such as funding human services not war, lobbying for the right to strike, and adopting ranked-choice voting—failed.

A particularly irksome pattern was some delegates calling the question (for an end to debate) almost immediately after a resolution or amendment was read. As I mentioned at the mic, our sister union, the APWU has a rule that debate cannot be ended until at least three speakers in favor and three opposed have had a chance to speak. I was also upset by all the resolutions passed en bloc (because of an Executive Council recommendation of approval) which prevented discussion of the issues, eg. our Sanctuary Union resolution opposing attacks on our immigrant members, their families and our customers. Finally, at least thirty late-submitted resolutions were not discussed because the convention ended, despite the fact that by the third day we had cancelled all workshops in order to add time to the business sessions.

Podcasts and online organizing have become increasingly important in connecting carriers across regions and supporting reform movements. However, delegates devoted relatively little attention to broader threats facing the Postal Service or workplace problems such as heat, smoke, workload, harassment, and robberies.

Overall, the convention demonstrated growing member participation and stronger independent reform activity, while also revealing significant disagreements about the union's leadership, democracy, bargaining practices, and future direction. Reformers are already organizing for the next convention in 2028.

Contact Your Congress Critter
Do Not Privatize the USPS—ever !
Support H.Res.70, S.Res. 147



Testify! [allowed only once/year, in November]
Demand PBOG Resist Trump's Attack on Vote-By-Mail
Stop Post Office Closures!

Postal Board of Governors Meeting
(attend in person or virtual, rally outside prior)

Tuesday, Nov. 10, 10-11am ET
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Washington, D.C
https://about.usps.com/who/leadership/board-governors/#sessions

Vote by Mail Safe—For Now

The Supreme Court has ruled against President Trump's attempt to federalize vote-by-mail, for now.

The president has claimed that 278,000 non-citizens are registered to vote. No evidence has been presented. Trump claims that mail voting is corrupt, with no verification. Nevertheless, the president's fabrications have sewed chaos and confusion among voters, many of whom will not vote as a result. Which may be Trump's intent, especially since polls show that Democrats vote in larger numbers by mail and are more discouraged by the mixed messages. The president has said that if vote-by-mail is allowed, Republicans will lose.

Trump's Executive Order, mandating state elections bureaus share their voter roles for vetting by the Department of Homeland Security (which has notoriously inaccurate citizenship data) and monitored by the USPS, has spawned a series of lawsuits, based on Article 1 of the US Constitution, which assigns the states, not the federal government, the responsibility for administering all elections, including federal elections.

The Supreme Court ruled, on a technicality, that the USPS, DHS, and local elections offices did not have time to make all necessary changes before the mid-term elections. However, between now and the next elections, and certainly before the 2028 elections, the Supreme Court, which has regularly upheld President Trump's actions, could rule that his Vote-By-Mail Executive Order is legal.

So we defenders of democracy and the people's postal service must increase our resistance to attacks on vote-by-mail. Certainly Congress can act. Also the Postal Board of Governors could order the Postmaster General to refuse to implement the president's orders. The PMG is hired by and answerable to the PBOG, not the US President. We should lobby Congress to pass universal vote-by-mail, maintaining state's authority over elections. We should lobby the Postal Board of Governors. A particular action that Congress persons can take to put pressure on the PBOG is to hold hearings (whether official or unofficial), calling postal governors to testify as to why they refuse to resist President Trump's illegal maneuvers. Especially, PBOG chair, Amber McReynolds, former CEO of the National Vote At Home Institute.

Sign-on letter to Postal Board of Governors
https://usmailnotforsale.org/take-action/

Sign-on letter to Congress for Hearings with PBOG
https://actionnetwork.org/letters/congress-call-hearings-with-postal-governors-on-mail-ballots

Vote Early—The Mail is Slow

For those of us who vote by mail, and one-third of Americans do, including half of the elderly, we no longer can rely on overnight delivery (remember when you could put a first class letter in the mail and it would be delivered the next day in the same city). Or if we live outside a major metropolitan area, we cannot rely on getting a postmark on the day we put the ballot in the mail.

State officials across the country are urging mail voters to send in their ballots at least a week prior to election day. Or, in some states, due to current unusual mail delays, are urging mail voters not to use the mail at all, but to use special drop boxes serviced by local election offices. In Oregon, a state with universal mail voting, the Secretary of State has asked the legislature to appropriate $1.25 million for 20 additional dropboxes and BallotTrax, an opt-in option for voters to be able to track the status of their ballot.

Why is this happening? With the confusion and chaos surrounding President Trump's March 31st Executive Order mandating the Department of Homeland Security and the USPS decide who gets to vote by mail, many of us thought the ballot delay was caused by Trump's various attacks on vote-by-mail.

Actually, no. Trump appointee, Postmaster Louis DeJoy, is responsible. His ten-year, Delivering for America plan, now in its fifth year, has delayed mail two, three and, in some areas, five days. By shifting long distance mail from planes to trucks, by shrinking and closing local mail processing and consolidating it into huge RPDCs - Regional Processing and Distribution Centers (about one per state), and probably most impactful, the elimination of the evening mail pick-up at 2/3 of the nations post offices, called RTO—Regional Transportation Optimization.

In the year since the roll-out of RTO, the number of late ballots has doubled in universal vote-by-mail states like California, Colorado, Hawaii, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Vermont, and Washington.

In Oregon, for example, where your ballot counts if it is postmarked by election day, where you receive your ballot at least two weeks prior to election day and where your postage is paid, your return ballot can be delayed three to four days if you live in a town over fifty miles from the RPDC (therefore subject to RTO)

If you live in a small town outside of Medford (near the California border), you used to be able to put your ballot in your mailbox on election day, have it picked up by the letter carrier who brought it to the local post office where it would be picked up and trucked to the mail processing plant in Medford that evening, postmarked that evening and delivered to the county elections office the next day. Your vote would be timely and valid.

Now, if you live in that small town outside Medford, your ballot, picked up by the letter carrier or dropped in a blue collection box, would sit at the local post office overnight (no evening truck) then be trucked the next day to Medford where, depending on how soon it arrives, would be trucked north, 273 miles (a five hour drive), to the RPDC in Portland (near the Washington border). The ballot is then postmarked that evening or the next morning and then shipped back to the Medford plant, where it will be delivered the next day or two to your county elections office.

So vote early and if you vote on election day, especially if you live outside the metro RPDC area, put the ballot in a drop box or take it into your local post office to get hand postmarked.

SIGN A LETTER TO YOUR SENATORS

The Senate is poised to vote on the nominations of four USPS governors whose backgrounds are in hedge funds, fintech and commodities trading. One of the nominees is a former waste management executive with a history of troubling business associations. Sign a letter to your Senators: ***https://actionnetwork.org/letters/stop-the-corporate-raid-on-the-postal-service***



Self-driving vehicles, Robots and Drones—Oh My!

The logistics industry — warehousing and delivery — is going through rapid changes. And the postal service is trying to keep up.

At one time the USPS was by far the largest parcel delivery service. Now Amazon has taken the top spot, thanks to their deep pockets and non-union, low-paid workforce.

The postal service continues to deliver Amazon parcels, especially on Sundays as a result of a sweet-heart contract penned in 2013, when the USPS created the low-wage, no-benefit City Carrier Assistant position to deliver low-priced Amazon parcels.

Now, Amazon is cutting back its USPS deliveries and beginning to expand its own deliveries, even in small town and rural areas, which have been the almost exclusive territory for postal service deliveries.

Amazon continues to roll out shorter and shorter delivery service, including same-day and even thirty minute turn around in major metropolitan areas. The postal service has just announced a pilot same-day service, partnering with Amazon to accept parcels at local post offices in the early afternoon, delivering them in the late afternoon and evening.

Amazon has been in the business of drone delivery, especially in suburban and ex-urban areas. Recently they announced plans to roll out drone delivery in 500 cities. The USPS has not moved past the research stage on drones.

Amazon has ordered 1,000 self-driving semi-trailer trucks and is investing heavily in electric semis, some of which will be self driving. These trucks will primarily haul Amazon products from their fulfillment centers to regional sorting hubs and delivery stations. The postal service has tested self-driving semis without making any commitment.

Amazon began acquiring electric vans in 2019 and now operates 50,000 electric delivery vans with a goal of 100,000 by 2030. The USPS began operating electric vans in 2022 and now operates 2,600 electric delivery vans (600 of which are New Generation Delivery Vehicles, designed especially for postal delivery by Oshkosh Defense manufacturing; 2,000 of which are Ford E-Transit electric vans). The USPS announced goal of 66,000 electric delivery vans by 2028 (45,000 NGDV and 21,000 commercial off-the-shelf) seems a bit unlikely.

Amazon is rapidly deploying Artificial Intelligence to power robots, both to lift and to transport parcels in its fulfillment centers and to monitor and supervise its employees through wrist-attached devices and now cameras, including driver-facing cameras, in their delivery vehicles. The USPS uses hand-held scanners which track parcels and employees and now are piloting dash-cams in vehicles. More recently self-driving robotic vehicles transport mail and parcels within processing plants. Each year bigger parcel sorting machines are deployed with huge conveyor belts, the biggest which can sort up to 70,000 parcels per hour.

Organized labor has engaged the struggle to tame Amazon, with some union election victories at fulfillment centers and delivery stations, led by the Teamsters *(https://teamster.org/divisions/amazon-division/)*. The APWU and the NALC have both committed to assist in this multi-union campaign.