

Iowa State Association of Letter Carriers



President's Report

April 2017

Greetings Sisters & Brothers,

H.R. 756, the Postal Reform Act of 2017 and H.R. 760, the Postal Service Financial Improvement Act of 2017 have been introduced in the House.

H.R. 756 is expected to move out of committee. When that happens, amendments can be offered. While this bill has the essential provisions that would put the Postal Service on track to financial stability, there are some things in this bill that we would like to see improved, like door delivery and Medicare integration. Keep an eye on this bill as it comes out of committee to see what is added or taken away. Be ready to voice your opinion to your Congressman so that they know that a viable Postal Service is important to you. If you're not sure what's in the bill take a look at the "Government Affairs" tab at www.nalc.org

A group of 5 Iowa letter carriers went to Washington immediately after the Rap Session to talk with our elected officials. We were able to meet with both of our Senators and Congressmen (or staff in the case of King, who was called away for a floor vote just before our scheduled meeting.) We talked about the house resolutions and H.R. 756 and how we would like to see it come out of committee and the amendments we would like to see added. For the most part, the meetings were very positive.

What's the latest word on the contract? Still negotiating and still hope for a settlement.

Our national officers negotiate the best possible contract on our behalf, or when necessary present our case at arbitration. Things like wages, benefits, work rules and grievance procedures are included. Our last contract had a general wage increase of 3.5%. Your branch president negotiates a local contract on your behalf. Annual leave policy, wash up time and holiday pecking order are included here. With the backing of the NBA and branch president, your steward enforces the terms of those contracts and represents you should you find yourself facing discipline. Your steward has likely been to training sessions and conventions to learn about the contract and how to defend it.

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Is there a cost for all of this (and so much more) to happen? Yes, of course there is. How is that cost covered? It's covered with union dues, and nearly everyone contributes to cover those costs by voluntarily paying union dues in an open shop environment. In fact, about 92% of letter carriers do so.

So we got that 3.5% raise. Now, along comes Congress and decides that carriers hired after January 1, 2013 should pay 2.3% more towards their FERS retirement benefit than letter carriers that are already working for the Postal Service – with no increase in those benefits. Then, a year later, Congress decides that carriers hired after January 1, 2014 should pay 3.6% more towards their FERS retirement than previously employed carriers – again, with no increase in benefits.

What happened to that contractual 3.5% raise? Congress took it away from our newly hired carriers - with a piece of legislation ! !

How do we stop Congress from passing legislation that is harmful to the Postal Service or legislation that takes away our contractual rights?

The Iowa State Association of Letter Carriers works with the NALC legislative department to inform our elected officials about the effects of legislation on letter carriers and the Postal Service. We go to Washington DC and to our Representative's and Senator's Iowa offices and talk to them. We work to elect men and women who will protect a viable Postal Service and protect our right to work under a negotiated union contract. Sometimes we donate money to a candidate. We knock on doors, make phone calls and write letters to educate letter carriers and union members about the men and women running for office.

Is there a cost for this? Yes, of course there is. How is that cost covered? It's covered with LCPF contributions, but comparatively few carriers voluntarily contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. In fact, only about 10% of letter carriers do so. So we voluntarily pay about \$25 a pay period for the best contract and union representation possible, but don't pay 3, 4 or 5 dollars more to prevent the benefits of that contract from being taken away.

Is it because we don't think it will happen? It has happened. How do we stop future losses? LCPF – it keeps our political effort going.

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It is vital to protect our contractual rights on the workroom floor, but it will do us little good if we ignore the fact that Congress can so easily take them away with a piece of legislation.

The Iowa State Association has the human resources in place to complete our legislative tasks, but we need a better financed Letter Carrier Political Fund to allow us to do all that we can. Please do all that you can to increase LCPF contributions from your members.

Jim Beach

President

Iowa State Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO

www.iowalettercarriers.org

By making a contribution to the LCPF, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the NALC or of employment by the USPS, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. The LCPF will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until cancelled. Contributions to the LCPF are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the LCPF from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administration staff, or their families.