



I was honored to stand in solidarity today with NALC Vice-President James Henry, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Mack Julion, Branch 11 President Elise Foster, as well as other NALC leaders, representatives from the broader labor movement, postal police, and hundreds of my fellow letter carriers. We responded to a Call to Action following the assassination of Sister Octavia Redmond while in the performance of her duties this past Friday.

I was there in uniform, along with other letter carriers that just weren't ready to deliver mail yet that morning – wearing the same uniform that our sister was murdered in just three days prior. We gathered to demand that **something** be done to protect us out on the street, and to extend some love to our union family that is hurting. We chanted, we rallied, we called for action, we wept for our departed sister, we hugged each other, and we prayed.

Being out there – and also seeing Branch 2 President Rob Kosier – brought back memories of Aundre Cross, another letter carrier gunned down on his route in Milwaukee, WI. It was about a year and a half ago that I attended his funeral. Around that time, we were getting robbed regularly – usually at gunpoint – for arrow keys. But the arrow key itself was never the issue. The issue is that we are out there on the street all alone, and while we carry with us things of value, we no longer feel valued by the people we work for.

The fact that we never received any type of hazard pay during the pandemic or the fact that we continue to labor under the terms of a subpar contract 429 days and counting past its expiration, was not lost on us out there today. Amazon refuses to make deliveries in some areas of Chicago and in other places around the country, instead dropping those packages off on our docks to be delivered by us, uniformed city letter carriers. Shouldn't that come with some level of protection for those of us that have to make those deliveries? Shouldn't the job of a letter carrier come with some level of dignity and respect from our employer and the communities that we serve?

We discussed legislation, and the *Protect Our Letter Carriers Act* (H.R. 7629), a bill that would prioritize prosecutions and provide for stiffer sentences for those that take aim at letter carriers while we are in the performance of our duties. But we also talked about another law, *The Postal Police Reform Act* (Sen. Bill 3356), which we do not even have a Fact Sheet on if you go to the NALC website. This bill would ensure that Postal Police Officers may be assigned to duty outside of Postal Service buildings to offer protection to letter carriers on their routes. We need both - **protection on our routes**, and a strong deterrent against anyone that goes after a letter carrier.

You can view my speech here <https://youtu.be/hvGZV1T-k8w?si=2QaaLdmq71-DzH9P> and you can see all of the speeches if you go to the Chas. D. Duffy, Branch #11 of the National Association of Letter Carriers Facebook page. Be safe out there, sisters and brothers and may God protect you and your family.

*Mike*