

LABOR RELATIONS



RECEIVED

OCT 5 2001

CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION UNIT
N.A.L.C. WASHINGTON, D.C.

Mr. Vincent R. Sombrotto
President
National Association of Letter
Carriers, AFL-CIO
100 Indiana Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001-2197

Re: D94N-4D-C 98102097
CLASS ACTION
HICKORY, NC 28603-9998

Dear Mr. Sombrotto:

I met with your representatives to discuss the above-captioned grievance at the fourth step of our contractual grievance procedure.

The issue in this case is whether an arbitrator may approve or deny a request by one of the parties to bifurcate an arbitration proceeding, hear only procedural issues on the first hearing date and postpone a hearing on the merits until the procedural issues are decided.

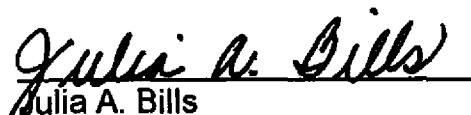
During our discussion we mutually agreed that an arbitrator has the discretion to approve or deny such a request to bifurcate the hearing of a case.


Accordingly, we agreed to remand this case for further processing under the Memorandum on Step 4 Procedures.

Please sign and return the enclosed copy of this letter as your acknowledgment of agreement to remand this case.

Time limits were extended by mutual consent.

Sincerely,


Julia A. Bills
Labor Relations Specialist
Labor Relations Policies
and Programs


Vincent R. Sombrotto
President
National Association of Letter
Carriers, AFL-CIO

Date: 10-9-01