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NTEU.org



Vol. LXXIII ★ No. 7

July 2016

# NTEU Bulletin

[www.nteu.org](http://www.nteu.org)

News, issues and advocacy for federal employees

## Why Increasing NTEU Membership is Important

*Fighting back against attacks by those in Congress who want to cut your pay, slash your benefits, erode your retirement. Gaining new workplace benefits at the bargaining table and fending off efforts to take back longstanding contract gains. Pushing back against unfair treatment in the workplace or arbitrary actions by management that make your work life more challenging.*

It takes collective strength to fight and win these battles and to ensure our success we need more bargaining unit employees (BUEs) at the 31 NTEU-represented agencies and departments to sign up for membership.

A bigger membership gives NTEU more clout and power to achieve the types of results federal employees need and deserve. A stronger NTEU will become an even more effective advocate for the federal workforce on Capitol Hill, at the agency level and in the courts as the union pursues its constant quest to improve the working lives of federal employees.

### Greater Numbers, Greater Power

"Greater numbers give us greater power and allow us to build on NTEU's rich legacy of success," said National President Tony Reardon. "Membership growth gives us power in numbers, which is why it's so important for all chapters to focus on getting more employees to join us."

As part of its summer membership drive themed "Working For a Better Future," NTEU is encouraging every member to talk to your co-workers about the importance of joining the union.

"Nationally, every NTEU member benefits from unity and collective action," said Reardon. "With every new member, we increase our chances of success

in our fight for paid parental leave, a better pay raise or lower health care costs."

### No One Stands Alone

"Higher membership also makes us more effective at the agency level or the local level, increasing our clout at the bargaining table and demonstrating to local management that no front-line employee ever stands alone," he said.

Chapter presidents who are part of a union-wide membership working group recently gave their views on why NTEU must grow.

"If you have low membership and you walk into a manager's office to discuss a problem or concern, they won't have any respect for you because you only represent a small portion of their workforce," said John Monahan, president of Chapter 143 (CBP El Paso).

Erick King, president of Chapter 202 (BFS HQ), said Congress and agency managers also pay attention to how many BUEs have signed up for NTEU membership. "The more members they see, the stronger they know our voice is," he said.

By becoming stronger, NTEU will gain "increased leverage to push back against ill-mannered things management is doing to bargaining unit employees," according to Seh Welch, president of Chapter 229 (HHS Headquarters).

The benefits of membership growth will also be felt at the negotiating table, according to Dawn Sleva, president of Chapter 242 (FDIC Chicago).

Agency managers will "know that you have (majority) support and that when you talk, you're talking for everybody," she said. "You're not just talking about yourself, you're talking about the entire group."

### An Investment

Joining the union and encouraging your colleagues to join is an investment in your professional future, said David Carrone, president of Chapter 6 (IRS Louisiana).

"Federal employees are being attacked every day," he said. "We care for (federal employees) as a family. Because at the end of the day, that's what we are. We are family. We need to stick together just like family will."

Current NTEU members can be the union's best recruiters in explaining to their colleagues how the union works on their behalf.

When talking with your co-workers, Sleva suggested focusing on the gains the union has achieved for federal employees—telework, flexible schedules, better pay and benefits, etc.—and how NTEU has stopped bad bills from becoming law.

"Speak from the heart," she said. "Talk about what (union membership) means to you as a person. Then people will really hear you."



**Greater numbers give us greater power and allow us to build on NTEU's rich legacy of success.**

—National President Tony Reardon



★ The President's View



# Creating Our Shared Vision

Thanks to generations of dedicated leaders and loyal members, NTEU's proud legacy of building a better future for federal employees spans decades. As our union looks forward, I would like to ask for your help in building a vision for tomorrow.

One of my key goals as National President is to create a vision for the future of our union that puts us on a path to be stronger 10 years from now than we are today and ensures that every bargaining unit employee has a compelling reason to support our union. Our vision for the future will help us see beyond any temporary setbacks and attain even greater achievements for you and your co-workers.

We constantly strive to be the very best and our shared vision must reflect that. It will be based upon our union's values, which form the bedrock of who we are and what we stand for as a union.

Our shared vision must be centered on what is best for our members. It must take into account the needs of our leaders so that they can be the most effective representatives possible and it must seek to engage every single bargaining unit employee in our work on their behalf.

For those reasons, we are embarking on an exciting research project, The Shared Vision Project, one that I hope every member will participate in. We will be reaching out to each of you in the next month via one of several methods including email, telephone, mailed surveys, focus groups, and interviews to find out how we are doing as a union and what you envision for your future and ours.

We need to hear about your current and future needs to be sure our resources are focused on the right issues and assess your satisfaction with our services. In addition, we will be reaching out to bargaining unit employees

who are not members to understand why they don't join and find ways to engage them to amplify our voice.

To ensure your responses are completely confidential, we have engaged the services of a professional research firm to develop a comprehensive study. They will provide us with detailed information on the views, needs and perceptions of all of our members, stewards, officers, chapter presidents, and bargaining unit employees.

We will ask key questions regarding legislative issues and activity, communications, representation, litigation, member benefits and services, NTEU leadership, NTEU membership, and key issues of concern.

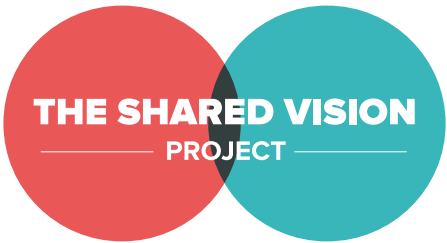
Our plan is to develop strategies to involve our current members to a greater extent, recruit prospective members, support and further engage our leaders, and enhance our communications and services to better meet the needs of our members and leaders.

To truly create a shared vision, I need every NTEU member to take part. You may be contacted on the telephone, by email, by mail, or be asked to participate in a focus group or interview. You will have the option to easily opt-out of the study but I hope you participate; your views and opinions matter.

With our shared vision for the future and our deeply-held values, we will ensure that our mission of dignity and respect for every federal worker becomes a reality.

Thank you for your participation as we strive to make certain that all federal employees are treated with the dignity and respect that they deserve.

Tony



## Our Core Values

Our vision should reflect these core values of our union:

- ▶ Ongoing active internal and external organizing to strengthen our voice
- ▶ The best representation in the federal sector
- ▶ Responsible stewardship of our union's resources
- ▶ Innovation and creativity
- ▶ Measured risks
- ▶ The encouragement of robust debate
- ▶ A transparent, efficient and ethical enterprise
- ▶ A diverse and inclusive organization
- ▶ A highly talented and engaged workforce
- ▶ Integrity, hard work, quality and consistency
- ▶ A learning organization that taps the knowledge of the entire organization



**A NEW YORK STATE OF MIND** At the annual membership meeting of NTEU Chapter 47 (IRS Manhattan) Chapter President Frank Heffler demonstrated his New York team spirit presenting NTEU National President Tony Reardon with a Bronx Bombers t-shirt. President Reardon spoke on pay, retirement, budgets and other issues of importance to the New York chapter members.



**President**  
Anthony M. Reardon

**Executive Vice President**  
James Bailey

To organize federal employees to work together to ensure that every federal employee is treated with dignity and respect.

—NTEU Mission

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## NTEU Ups Pressure on Congress to Pass Paid Parental Leave Bill

The United States is the only industrialized nation in the world that doesn't guarantee paid maternity leave to federal workers who are new mothers. Most other affluent countries also provide paid paternity leave, but not the U.S.

Congress has the opportunity to change the situation by providing paid parental leave to federal workers, one of the country's largest group of employees. To celebrate Father's Day (June 19), NTEU launched a Facebook campaign to put pressure on Congress to pass the Federal Employee Paid Parental Leave Act.

House and Senate versions of the legislation have been languishing on Capitol Hill since last year. H.R. 532, introduced by Rep. Carolyn Maloney of New York, has more than 60 co-sponsors. That bill and S. 2033, introduced by Sen. Brian Schatz of Hawaii and Sen. Barbara Mikulski of Maryland, would both provide six weeks of paid parental leave to federal employees to care for their new biological, adopted or foster children.

"Past attempts to pass this legislation have failed. It's time for this Congress to pass this family-friendly proposal and help new mothers and fathers establish strong ties with their children from the get-go," National President Tony Reardon said.

As a father of four, Reardon said he knows the importance of early bonding between parents and their new children. "This sows the seeds for a lifetime of strong bonds between parents and their kids," he said. Reardon drafted an opinion piece on the issue that was published by Federal News Radio on its web site.

Paid parental leave also has societal benefits. According to a CNN analysis published last year, it reduces the need for public assistance, decreases infant mortality rates and depression among new mothers, and increases the likelihood of well-baby visits and vaccinations. Other studies show paid parental leave reduces employee turnover, increases productivity, improves morale and reduces absenteeism. It would also help the federal government attract younger workers who seek flexible,



family-friendly workplaces.

The private sector is way ahead of the federal government in recognizing the value of paid parental leave, Reardon noted. More than half the Fortune 100 companies offer it and large private employers such as Netflix and Microsoft have expanded their paid parental leave policies in recent years.

"The federal government should be a model employer and set the example for other employers, not lag behind," the NTEU leader said.

Although federal employees receive sick and annual leave, it often takes them years to cobble together enough leave to take off for an appropriate length of time for the birth, adoption or fostering of a child. The Family and Medical Leave Act is an option, but it provides 12 weeks of unpaid leave for medical and family issues and many federal employees cannot afford to go without a paycheck, according to Reardon.

"The richest nation on earth has the poorest record when it comes to guaranteeing paid parental leave for its people. This is unacceptable. Congress should seize the opportunity to provide this vital benefit to federal employees," Reardon said. "I believe passionately that federal employees should not have to choose between their paychecks and caring for their newest family members."

### 2017 PAY STILL UNDECIDED

In moving forward the Financial Services and General Government funding measure, the Senate Appropriations Committee was silent on the amount of a federal pay raise in January 2017.



That bill sometimes includes specific language on the pay hike. Since it is silent, it allows the president's proposed 1.6 percent raise to go into effect unless Congress takes other action.

NTEU believes that president's proposal is too low and is working to increase congressional support for a 5.3 percent pay raise in January.

Federal employees have seen little to no increases over the past six years, while prices for goods and services continue to rise. Over the same time frame, the private sector has averaged a 10.6 percent increase in wages.

Legislation providing a 5.3 percent increase in January is pending in the House (H.R. 4585) and Senate (S. 2699).

"NTEU members should reach out to their elected members of Congress and ask for their support," said National President Tony Reardon. "Those calls and emails make a difference."

## MSPB: The Fight to Restore Your Rights Continues

NTEU is always hard at work to protect the due process rights of federal employees. For the past two years, NTEU has been aggressively advocating to restore access to the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) for certain employees.

A 2014 decision (*Kaplan v. Conyers*) by the Federal Circuit Court in a Department of Defense case stated that the MSPB could not review an agency's decision concerning the eligibility of employees to occupy "sensitive" positions. "The loss of this decades-old layer of protection for federal employees is simply unacceptable and could prove detrimental across all federal government agencies and NTEU is working to reverse it," said National President Tony Reardon.

Progress was made this June with the introduction into the Senate of S. 2968, a bill to reauthorize the Office of Special Counsel (OSC). This legislation contains language to reverse the 2014 ruling against MSPB, restoring the board's decision making powers on these cases. NTEU is now working to have this provi-



sion included in the House version of the bill and in any final bill that goes to the president for signature. The House OSC reauthorization does not contain this language. NTEU is working to make sure the Senate language prevails.

The *Conyers* decision could leave many "sensitive position" employees with little ability to ensure that adverse actions taken against

them are legally appropriate. Employees could be deemed ineligible due to any number of reasons including inaccurate financial information, personal dislike or whistleblower activities. More and more union members, especially in Customs and Border Protection, are being deemed "sensitive" in their positions.

NTEU has also been working with Reps. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) and Rob Wittman (R-VA). The lawmakers introduced a standalone bill in the House to restore these rights. NTEU previously submitted testimony before the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, presenting its stance on the crucial role MSPB plays in federal employees' lives.

The MSPB is a critical piece of the 1978 Civil Service Reform Act, allowing federal employees' access to an unbiased third party outside of their agency. The goal in creating the MSPB is to offer a place for employees to be both protected and appeal any major decisions regarding their employment.



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## My NTEU

### Welcome to Your Page

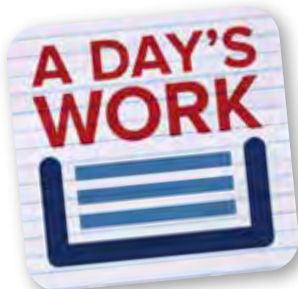
This page is personalized just for you. Be sure to scroll down for member-only blog posts, your contract and agency-specific news, including bargaining information.

Visit the members' page for your contract, personalized news and information about your workplace not found anywhere else. Learn how developments on Capitol Hill, at the bargaining table and in the courts could impact you.



## A Day's Work

Our first-ever blog gives you an insider's look at some of the biggest issues impacting federal employees. It's also a place to spotlight you—our members—and the union's accomplishments in workplaces nationwide.



## Legislative Action

It's easier than ever to write or call Congress on critical federal employee issues. Get action alerts on every page and check out our new, enhanced Legislative Action Center.



## THERE ARE TWO WAYS TO

- 1 The new NTEU.org is mobile-friendly, so you can get NTEU news and alerts on your smartphone or tablet.



# U WERE HERE

## THE NEW NTEU.ORG

the hottest destinations this summer.  
new site you won't want to miss.



### Member Benefits

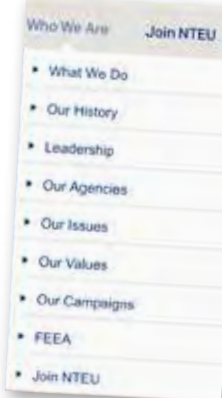


Hitting the road this summer? NTEU members save on rental cars, hotels, oil changes and even auto insurance. Information about these and many other money-saving discounts can be easily found in a user-friendly Member Benefits section.



### Publications

NTEU members are the most informed federal employees around. Staying on top of the latest news has been made even easier with our new, one-stop subscription page for e-publications and visual Bulletin archive.



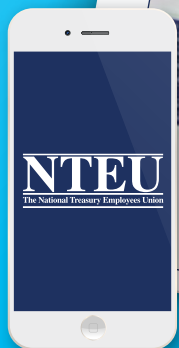
### Improved Navigation

No GPS needed on the new NTEU.org. You can easily find what you're looking for thanks to our intuitive navigation and improved search function.



## DO TAKE NTEU WITH YOU

**2** Before you go, order NTEU gear from the NTEU Store including T-shirts, golf accessories and caps. Shipping is free!



★ Inside NTEU

# A Home Destroyed; A Chapter Steps Up



Smoke streaming across the horizon is not unusual in Southern California. With ongoing drought conditions, California wildfires have been making news across the nation. So when Chapter 92 (IRS San Diego) President Malcolm Gettmann was relaxing at his home one evening and spotted smoke in the distance, he was not surprised. Where that fire was coming from, however, would leave him shocked.

Just four miles away the smoke Gettmann viewed from his living room filled the home of Simon Bodilla, a long-time IRS employee and friend. The evening of the fire, Bodilla heroically risked his life to alert neighbors and charged through the flames to rescue his son-in-law's dog. Bodilla's quick thinking saved lives, a beloved pet and left no victims on the scene. But in those few chaotic minutes, the Bodilla family lost everything.

The next morning, Gettmann scrolled through the news to check on the origins of last

night's fire. He was shocked to see Simon Bodilla's name on the screen and learn that his house was destroyed in a fire of unknown origins.

*What started with a few small donations here and there soon rose into hundreds then thousands of dollars.*

"Simon is always going out of his way to help others, truly" said Gettmann. "Reading how he had more concern for his neighbors' safety than his own wasn't a surprise at all."

Gettmann instantly checked around the office to see if anyone had heard of what efforts were in place to help this family. There were none. It took Gettmann just a few minutes to draft an email to Chapter 92 members, sounding the alert that a colleague was in need. Gettmann went to a local credit union to set-up an

account for the Bodilla family, guaranteeing that 100 percent of any donations would go directly to them.

The response was overwhelming. What started with a few small donations here and there soon rose into hundreds then thousands of dollars. Gettmann was amazed at the outpouring not only from his chapter members but from other employees at other agencies across the federal building that also houses Chapter 92. In little more than a month Chapter 92, along with other anonymous donors, raised more than \$5,000 for Simon Bodilla and his family. A welcome and unexpected relief after such a tragic disaster.

"This was money for the basics, the things you don't think you need every day: clothes for work, money to get around, and toiletries. It's something to keep you afloat as you try to get through this trauma," Gettmann said.

He is no stranger to the perils of these fires. Gettmann's own family underwent a devas-

tating fire where no one was hurt but everything was lost. And Chapter 92 was eager to help Bodilla—just six months earlier another colleague's home suffered the same wrath in a wildfire.

The outpouring of support from Chapter 92 helped the Bodilla family and prompted Bodilla, after years of being a manager, to re-join NTEU—an unexpected source of solace in a crisis.

## NTEU's FEVER Fund Promotes Voter Education, Registration

Our democracy is strengthened by engaged citizens who regularly vote. To encourage voter education, registration and turnout, NTEU supports those efforts through the FEVER Fund.

Now in its 20th year the fund, formally known as the Federal Employees Voter Education and Registration (FEVER) Fund, uses resources donated for these broad purposes under the premise that the more potential voters know and understand about issues, the more likely they are to register and to vote.

The FEVER fund complements but does not replace NTEU's political action arm, TEPAC, which supports candidates who support the federal workforce with voluntary contributions from individual NTEU members.

Sometimes, money accumulated by FEVER is, in turn, contributed to local committees or other organizations active in both voter registration and get-out the vote efforts. Every election cycle, NTEU chapters across the country work hard in local voter registration drives, and efforts to educate federal workers on issues of importance.

Overall, the goal of these efforts is a straightforward one, said National President Tony Reardon. "Everything that impacts the work lives of federal employees and their workplac-

es is in the hands of elected federal officials," he said. "Federal employees have the chance to weigh in on our national leaders but only if they are know the issues and are registered to vote."

The money under the FEVER program is provided, first, through a contribution from NTEU of \$1.50 per member; and, second,

from an NTEU match of two to one for donations made by chapters. So if a chapter donates \$100 to the fund, the National Office contributes an additional \$200.

NTEU members who do not wish to have their dues used for the FEVER fund can opt out of the fund by completing and returning the form below.

FEVER FUND

Federal Employees Voter Education and Registration Fund

I do not want \$1.50 of my national dues or any match to contributions made by my chapter going to FEVER, the NTEU Federal Employees Voter Education and Reistration Fund, devoted to protecting and advancing the interests of federal employees in the political process.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

SSN \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter Number \_\_\_\_\_

Form must be received by August 2, 2016

Please send this form to: NTEU FEVER Fund • 1750 H St., NW • Washington, DC 20006



# NTEU Members Protect Financial Consumers, Economy

*Thousands of NTEU-represented employees who work for financial regulatory agencies perform valuable public services that often go unnoticed but are critical in our daily lives.*



They make sure banks, credit unions, credit-card issuers, mortgage companies, securities and commodities trading firms and others in the financial industry follow federal laws and regulations, treat their customers and investors fairly, and refrain from taking risks that could jeopardize the entire economy.

"NTEU is proud to represent these unsung heroes, who protect the public from financial wrongdoing and educate citizens on how to become knowledgeable participants in our economic system. They preserve the integrity of our entire economy, making sure the financial system works the way it's supposed to for all Americans," said National President Tony Reardon.

NTEU members who work for the so-called FIRREA (Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery, and Enforcement Act) agencies are accountants, lawyers, analysts, examiners, statisticians, computer experts, support personnel and represent a host of other professions.

"NTEU is committed to making sure they receive fair compensation comparable to the private sector and to providing them with the workplace flexibilities they need to fulfill the exacting demands of their work," Reardon said.

## FDIC

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) carries out its mission through three major programs: insurance, supervision and receivership management.

This agency protects state-chartered bank customers from illegal or discriminatory actions and makes sure banks comply with applicable federal laws and regulations.

FDIC-regulated institutions carry the familiar sign that says customer accounts—up to \$250,000 per individual deposit—are backed by the full faith and credit of the U.S. government. No depositor has lost even a penny of insured funds as a result of a bank failure since FDIC was created in 1933.

Dawn Sleva, president of Chapter 242 (FDIC Chicago), said the agency not only makes sure consumers are treated fairly but that they also have ample information about the institution before they deposit their hard-earned money.

"People think FDIC's role is just insuring deposits," Sleva said. "They don't recognize that we enforce fair-lending legislation, do consumer protection and community reinvestment. They also don't recognize that we fund ourselves through bank insurance fees and reinvestment of that money."

## OCC

The OCC, an independent bureau of the Treasury Department formed by President Lin-

coln in 1863, charters, regulates and oversees national banks and federal savings associations and the federal branches of foreign banks.

Its portfolio includes the country's five largest banks and federally-chartered savings associations (thrifts), according to Crystal Maddox, president of Chapter 302 (OCC HQ).

NTEU-represented OCC employees "make sure that our national banks and federal savings associations operate in a safe and sound manner, provide fair access to financial services, treat customers fairly and comply with applicable law and regulation," Maddox said.

Because OCC is a banking regulator, the majority of OCC members are examiners who conduct on-site reviews of financial institutions and analyze their operations and practices.

## SEC

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) regulates Wall Street and looks out for securities investors. It enforces relevant federal laws and writes rules to ensure fair play within the securities sector.

"NTEU's members at the SEC protect American investors and our financial system every day by conducting compliance examinations of brokers and investment advisers, bringing enforcement actions against companies and individuals who violate the securities laws, reviewing filings of publicly traded companies, and promulgating rules to ensure fairness and efficiency in our securities markets," said Greg Gilman, president of Chapter 293 (SEC).

The SEC consumer focus has become increasingly important in recent years as more first-time investors turn to financial markets to help pay for college or retirement. The SEC's watchdog role has heightened as a result.

In fiscal year 2015, the SEC filed 807 enforcement actions and reaped \$4.2 billion in penalties and restitution for defrauded individuals and institutional investors, according to the agency.

## NCUA

The National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) regulates, supervises and insures federally-chartered credit unions and most state-chartered ones. Credit unions are member-owned, not-for-profit institutions that provide cooperative credit to their customers.

NCUA protects the rights of credit union customers, hears complaints against specific institutions and insures up to \$250,000 per individual depositor.

"NCUA ensures that credit unions continue to thrive as places where people can borrow and save," said Greg Painter, assistant chief steward and vice president of Chapter 303 (NCUA).

NCUA examiners conduct annual examinations of credit union loans and deposit accounts to make sure the institutions comply with the law and operate in a sound manner. The examiners' goal is to make sure credit unions operate safely "so they can continue to help people with their loans and savings needs into the future," Painter added.

## CFPB

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) protects consumers through rulemaking, supervision and enforcement in addition to consumer education and support. Created in 2011, the agency has provided more than \$11 billion in relief for more than 25 million consumers in just a few short years.

Some members of Chapter 335 (CFPB) make sure people have a voice when it comes to dealing with companies that provide financial services and products, according to Chapter President Gail Wisely. "Consumer Response Specialists can help them get the response they deserve," she said.

Other chapter members look out for consumers, especially service members, older Americans, students and working families. They also develop "free and unbiased educational tools and resources to reach consumers at the right time with the right information as they make critical financial decisions," Wisely said.

A number of other NTEU-represented CFPB employees examine banks and other financial service providers to make sure they comply with federal consumer protection laws.

## CFTC

The Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) also regulates Wall Street, concentrating on commodity futures and swaps.

With a staff of economists, lawyers, forensic investigators and others, CFTC regulates financial instruments called derivatives and swaps. The agency also wins money back for defrauded investors and collects penalties from violators—a combined \$3.14 billion in FY 2015, according to the agency.

NTEU-represented CFTC employees make sure "everybody follows the rules and no one has an unfair advantage and that the market has transparency," said Mary Connelly, president of Chapter 337 (CFTC).

"We level the playing field for (all) investors," she added. "The idea is to ensure the integrity of the marketplace and make sure markets aren't gamed in a way that allows some entities and individuals to profit at the expense of others."

July 2016

## ★ Shop Talk



### NTEU Fights Flawed Funding Proposals

NTEU is saying no to congressional proposals to shortchange the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) in fiscal year (FY) 2017. A funding bill moving through the House would cut IRS funding by \$236 million next year and freeze the budgets of SEC and CFTC at this year's level. The Senate's version of that bill would freeze the budgets of all three agencies at current levels—\$11.2 billion for the IRS, \$1.6 billion for SEC and \$250 million for CFTC. National President Tony Reardon said he “won’t be deterred” from his commitment to fight to adequately fund these three and all other NTEU-represented agencies.

### Reardon has Inaugural Meeting with OCC Chief

In his first meeting with Comptroller of the Currency Thomas Curry since becoming NTEU's leader, National President Tony Reardon underscored the importance of involving front-line employees beforehand in decisions aimed at improving work processes, boosting morale and pay and making other changes in workplace policies and practices. Reardon sought last month's meeting with Curry, head of the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC), to establish a relationship on behalf of NTEU-represented OCC employees. Curry expressed support for greater pre-decisional involvement by front-line employees and agreed to provide retroactive locality, or “geo,” pay for OCC employees dating back to January 2016.

### Settlement Reached On Changes to Tax Deposit Program

NTEU and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) have settled a national grievance filed a year ago after the IRS changed portions of the Federal Tax Deposit Alerts Program without consulting with the union—a violation of the 2012 NTEU-IRS contract. Under the new terms, IRS agreed to streamline the program to boost efficiency and announce the changes to managers and employees within 60 days. Future changes will first go through bargaining with NTEU, meeting the requirements of the 2016 National Agreement.

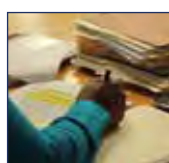


### DHS Funding Bill Approved by the House

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) would get a small budget increase next year under funding bills that are advancing in the House and Senate. In June, the House Appropriations Committee approved \$41.2 billion for DHS in fiscal year (FY) 2017, or \$246 million above the current level. The Senate Appropriations Committee approved a measure calling for same budgetary increase. Both bills proposed nearly \$11.2 billion for Customs and Border Protection (CBP), enough to support 23,775 CBP Officers. But neither measure contained money to increase staffing for agriculture inspections or trade enforcement as NTEU has urged. The big difference between the two bills is that the House measure would raise the overtime cap for CBP Officers by \$10,000 (\$35,000 to \$45,000).

### NTEU Making Progress on HHS Relations

NTEU is actively working to improve labor-management relations with the Department of Health & Human Services (HHS). President Tony Reardon recently sent a letter to HHS Secretary Sylvia Mathews Burwell noting several problems and calling for action to improve the relationship. HHS responded in May and reaffirmed its commitment to working with NTEU to “ensure a healthy environment for our employees.” Since then, Reardon has met with top HHS labor-management officials. While NTEU anticipates this rebuilding will take time, Reardon said he is encouraged by the positive steps toward a healthier relationship.



### NTEU Begins Pay Bargaining at FDIC

NTEU is negotiating a new compensation agreement with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), seeking modest increases in funding for employee pay increases, as well as improvements to employee benefit and travel reimbursement provisions.

The next session is scheduled for early August. NTEU will advocate for fair and reasonable pay increases and revisions to benefit and travel provisions that will retain FDIC's ranking as one of the “Best Places to Work” in the federal government.

## FEGLI Open Enrollment Period Set for September

A rare open enrollment period for the federal government's group life insurance program is scheduled for the month of September. Through the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) program, employees can receive life insurance coverage at group rates. Generally, employees must enroll in FEGLI when first hired. There is not an annual open season for the life insurance benefit; the last open season was 12 years ago.

While the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is charged with running the program and setting premium rates, OPM contracts with Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (Metlife) to provide the insurance coverage. In fiscal year 2013, more than 75,000 death and dismemberment claims were paid, totaling \$2.7 billion in benefit payments.

The open season allows employees, including those who previously turned down the insurance, to enroll without a qualifying life event or taking a physical exam. Overall insurance levels can be adjusted during the open season as well.

### Here is what is available:

- ▶ Basic coverage: life insurance coverage equal to your annual basic pay, plus \$2,000. The cost for this is shared between you and the government, with you paying 2/3 of the cost and the government picking up the remaining 1/3 of the premiums.

- ▶ Optional coverage: additional options for higher levels of coverage and an option to cover eligible children. These options are paid fully by you at the group rates.

### Things to consider:

- ▶ Insurance coverage selected during the open season is not effective until Oct. 1, 2017.
- ▶ You must have FEGLI coverage for five years in order to carry it into retirement. So, if you elect coverage during this open season, and want to have it after you retire, you must stay employed with the federal government until 2022.
- ▶ Employees who enroll during the open season but retire or leave the federal government before the Oct. 1, 2017, effective coverage date are considered not covered.
- ▶ Retirees are not eligible for the open season; although some rehired annuitants may be.

Get additional information from your personnel office or the OPM website ([www.opm.gov](http://www.opm.gov)) to understand fully the coverage, rates and any restrictions. OPM has a FEGLI calculator that can help determine the costs of various amounts of coverage.

FEGLI has been in existence since 1954. It is the largest group life insurance program in the world, covering more than 4 million federal employees and retirees, as well family members.