

The NTEU logo is displayed in white, serif, all-caps font on a dark blue background.The graphic features the word "RESPECT" in large, bold, white, sans-serif, all-caps font, with "MY CONTRACT" in a smaller, white, sans-serif, all-caps font below it. The text is set against a dark blue background with a large, light blue star shape behind the word "RESPECT".

## Contract Negotiations Break Down

### **Management walks away from the table on the second day of bargaining.**

Discussions broke down on the second day of what was supposed to be the first week of approximately 18 weeks of bargaining over a new term agreement.

The talks began with management proposing a seven-year agreement so that it can lock in a series of harmful changes for as long as possible. That includes removing your AWS, telework, awards, and transit subsidy programs from the contract along with many other important programs. HHS is also seeking to strip employees of their ability to enforce contract rights in several important areas though the grievance procedure, ensuring they have no recourse to challenge unfair decisions.

HHS made it clear that it feels emboldened by the administration's anti-labor, anti-employee executive orders issued May 25. NTEU is currently fighting those orders in court. When pressed, HHS refused to provide an explanation of the proposals or the rationale behind them, claiming they have no obligation to do so. Instead, HHS demanded that NTEU provide counter-proposals and indicated negotiations were "closed" on Article 2 (Contract Duration and Termination) until then. NTEU stood firm and reminded HHS of its duty to bargain in good faith, which includes explaining proposals.

On day two of bargaining, HHS left the bargaining table after less than 10 minutes of discussion on Article 2. Management then contacted the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS), the independent agency charged with assisting parties who reach collective bargaining impasses. NTEU believes this was extremely premature after only one day of bargaining and only one of more than 30 articles discussed.

Nevertheless, the FMCS mediator will participate in the next bargaining session on July 30, and NTEU is hopeful this will have a positive impact on negotiations.

These negotiations are shaping up to be among the most contentious that NTEU has seen in our 80-year history. NTEU is committed to fighting for you, no matter how long and arduous the negotiations are, and no matter where they take us. To be successful, we must show a united front at the bargaining table and send the message that employees are opposed to management's regressive proposals. [Support NTEU's efforts by signing our petition to Secretary Alex Azar asking for respect in the workplace and at the bargaining table.](#)

NTEU will continue to keep you updated on developments.

[\*\*Sign our Petition\*\*](#)