

Protect & Defend

NTEU 2011-2013





OUR MISSION:

TO ORGANIZE FEDERAL EMPLOYEES
TO WORK TOGETHER TO ENSURE THAT
EVERY FEDERAL EMPLOYEE IS TREATED
WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT.

Protect & Defend



NTEU's 75th year of protecting and defending federal employees coincides with an extremely challenging political environment in our nation's capital.

Sequestration, crisis budgeting, a pay freeze and furloughs are just some of the trials federal employees and federal agencies have faced in the past two years. In spite of it all, frontline federal workers remained steadfast in carrying out their important work, determined not to let the American people down.

As Americans, we can be assured that our food, water, drug supply, even the air we breathe, is safe. We know that our bank deposits are secure, the nation's revenues are collected and that our country's borders are protected 24/7. Yet, too often, federal workers are criticized or viewed as an easy source of funds for budget savings.

This is where NTEU comes in. Whether it is the past two years, or the past 75 years, NTEU has been a fierce advocate for federal employees. We protect and defend the federal workforce before Congress, in the courts, at the bargaining table, in the workplace and with the media, and we continually work to promote the well-being and interests of those we represent. Even in tough environments we find success, and no matter what, NTEU proudly provides federal employees with the top quality representation they need and deserve.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Colleen M. Kelley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Colleen M. Kelley
NTEU National President

Protecting Your Working Lives

Protect

Sequestration. If there is one word that can define the past two years, this is it. It is a word that burst into the public dialogue just a few years ago and now, unfortunately, easily rolls off the tongue of anyone connected to the federal government. It impacts every federal workplace and every federal employee, and unless it is stopped, it will do so until 2021.

Two years ago, sequestration was a threat designed to make a congressional super committee do its job and find an appropriate and sensible way to cut the deficit. That committee failed and a concept suddenly began to take shape and form.

It would be more than a year before the deep and damaging cuts mandated by the sequester would actually hit federal agencies, and it was a tumultuous time for federal employees.

Partisan divides on the federal budget and deficit control measures continued to deepen and widen. Actual approval of individual funding bills for federal agencies became a harder goal to reach and federal agencies and employees were brought to the brink of a government shutdown. The government was kept open with a series of short- and long-term continuing resolutions.



Protecting Your Working Lives

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Many in Congress looked to federal employees as an easy source of money and found that the government's ongoing budget issues opened up an opportunity to attack the federal workforce.

“Federal employees are working with severely limited resources. They have faced government shutdowns four times this year. Yet, they have worked diligently to deliver services to the public.”

President Kelley, *Washington Post*, December 19, 2011

Dozens of bills were introduced that would harm federal employees. Some would impose individual harm by extending the pay freeze or increasing employee retirement contributions. Others went after the entire workforce through indiscriminate cuts of 10 percent or more to the number of federal positions.

NTEU fought back against each and every piece of legislation through a constant presence on Capitol Hill and nationwide grassroots efforts involving chapters and members. In such a hostile environment, success can be measured by what did not happen, and ensuring that those bills did not pass was a goal the union reached.

Despite widespread warnings from NTEU and many others, sequestration continued to hover over the nation, threatening to unfurl devastating cuts that would make it very difficult for federal employees to do their jobs and for agencies to fully execute their given missions.



Protecting Your Working Lives

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With the Jan. 1, 2013, implementation date approaching, Congress reached a dramatic New Year's Eve agreement to delay sequestration by three months. That put the start of the sequester and the end of the current CR in the same time frame, setting federal employees up for a one-two punch in March. NTEU worked tirelessly trying to avoid sequestration and get the current year's funding up to the needed levels but the union's efforts were thwarted by those in Congress who do not understand or respect the work of federal employees.

“No matter what else is going on, the American people can count on our members, and our members can count on NTEU.”

President Kelley, *GovExec*, August 11, 2011

As sequestration rolled out, so did the threat of unpaid furlough days for many NTEU-represented employees. Adding to the financial hit for federal employees was the extension of the two-year pay freeze until the end of 2013.

NTEU began work with many federal agencies to identify funds that could be used to offset furloughs while continuing to educate elected representatives and the American public about the impact of sequestration, furloughs and the pay freeze on federal agencies and employees. That work continues.

Even in the face of constant attacks, NTEU carved out a number of victories that are making a difference for those the union represents. Long-sought legislation was passed creating a phased retirement opportunity for federal workers near the end of their careers.



Protecting Your Working Lives



During it, eligible employees would work part-time and collect a pro-rated portion of their salary and their annuity.

Whistleblower rights got a much-needed expansion, ending a long effort to secure protections for employees who challenge scientific censorship, and making it an abuse of authority to punish disclosures about such censorship, among other important gains.

There was an immediate implementation, at NTEU's urging, of the extension of federal benefits to same-sex couples and families following a Supreme Court decision on the Defense of Marriage Act.

NTEU members reacted swiftly and generously to help their federal colleagues and others who were victims of Hurricane Sandy and other natural disasters. NTEU matched donations, up to \$25,000, made to the Federal Employee Education and Assistance (FEEA) Fund so it could provide quick aid to federal employees in need.

The union also sought and won improvements in a number of agency contracts. NTEU members are now benefiting from expanded alternative work schedule programs, brand-new telecommuting programs, and new protections relating to performance appraisals.

NTEU's efforts over the past two years look a lot like the union's entire 75-year history: working every day to protect and advance the rights and interests of federal employees.



Beyond the Basics

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On any given day, NTEU can be found undertaking the basic day-to-day work that its members expect and depend upon. Beyond the basics, however, a number of areas have drawn specific attention from the union over the past two years that directly impact the quality of life for NTEU members.

When the workday begins, how to get to work and who pays for the commute are big issues for federal workers—and these are areas NTEU has impacted in positive ways.

Alternative work schedules and telework programs help thousands of employees balance the competing demands of work and home. At every bargaining opportunity, NTEU strengthens options for employees bringing as much flexibility as possible to the traditional work schedule.

For those who use public transportation to get to work, NTEU was a driving force in securing parity between the parking and public transit aspects of the federal transit subsidy program.

A pre-tax parking benefit is being brought to many NTEU-represented agencies. These programs allow employees to use pre-tax money to pay for parking at a location from which the worker commutes to the job, or to cover parking costs at work for a vehicle that is part of a car- or vanpool.

The starting point for these improvements, and others, most often takes the form of appropriate contract language assertively enforced. Negotiating the right language and enforcing it pay off for employees—both in programs that enhance their work lives and puts money in their pockets. That is a win-win situation that NTEU is known for delivering to its members.

Defending Federal Employees

Defend

Tough times never last, but a tough union does.

How? By standing up for what you believe in and being strong in the face of adversity. NTEU and its members did that over the past two years, utilizing tried and true methods of raising their voices and embracing new approaches to supporting federal workers.

“...[M]any of the employees at IRS are represented by one of the toughest unions in this country.”

Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), Senate Floor, May 16, 2013

All the activity of the past two years shows that NTEU is unyielding when it comes to defending federal employees. NTEU members are proud of who they are and what they do, and they are not afraid to say it.

As sequestration approached and took hold, NTEU chapters in city after city organized “Stop the Sequester” rallies that were attended by hundreds of members. They engaged the public by handing out fliers detailing the devastating impacts of the across-the-board cuts and held colorful posters that were featured in much of the news coverage the events garnered. The rallies were conducted outside of federal buildings, in public parks, and in front of the district offices of members of Congress.

Those who could not attend a rally also made sure their voices were heard. Letters to the editor from chapter leaders detailing the sequester’s harmful consequences were published in newspapers throughout the country. President Kelley also set the record straight by responding to inaccurate opinion pieces and articles with a series of letters to the editor.



Defending Federal Employees

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Congress did not escape NTEU's efforts. Hundreds of in-person visits to lawmakers' offices joined with tens of thousands of phone calls and letters urging them to stop sequestration and provide federal agencies with adequate resources.

NTEU did not stop there. Federal employees were facing a formidable challenge that required an innovative response. After months of the media, pundits and lawmakers persistently targeting federal employees, NTEU worked with a polling firm to survey Americans about their views on federal services.

Armed with the finding that most Americans value highly the services provided by federal employees, President Kelley took that message to an audience of 13 million viewers through a news conference and satellite media tour.

In the months leading up to the sequester, NTEU looked to its members to clear up misconceptions and tell their own personal stories to the American public. The union surveyed its members, and in just three days, it received more than 2,250 responses, which the union released to the media.

NTEU has seen plenty of obstacles in 75 years, and it will see many more, but the reason it continues to thrive is simple. When NTEU runs into a wall, the union looks for new, different ways to climb it—and never gives up.



Standing Together

Defend

The power of NTEU solidarity was on full display during the 2012 congressional election season, when chapters worked tirelessly to ensure candidates who appreciate federal employees won their elections, even in tight races.

In the months leading up to the election, hundreds of NTEU members volunteered to conduct voter registration drives and lunch and learns, educate coworkers about the issues and candidates, distribute NTEU congressional voting records and meet with members of Congress.

Chapters worked hard to ensure members understood the impact of the election on their working lives and the importance of making their voices heard at the polls.

NTEU volunteers also worked nights and weekends on behalf of pro-federal employee candidates, sending tens of thousands of letters and following that up with thousands of phone calls to educate members in states with competitive races.

When the results were in, it was clear that all the hard work—including hundreds of volunteer hours—was worth it. Working together, NTEU members helped gain congressional seats for pro-federal employee candidates in both House and Senate races, particularly in Ohio, Virginia and Massachusetts.



“NTEU has been an important ally as we continue to fight efforts to place the burden of our current economic challenges on the backs of our two million middle class federal employees who already have contributed so much.”

Sen. Daniel Akaka (D-Hawaii), *Hawaii 24/7*, March 7, 2012



The skill, energy and experience of NTEU continue to attract federal employees, including those at one of the newest agencies—the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB).

In the spring of 2013, 800 frontline CFPB employees chose NTEU to be their exclusive representative in an election.

When all the ballots were counted, NTEU had won the election by an astounding margin of 80 percent. That is because NTEU has a reputation among other financial regulatory agencies built on its solid record of achievements. Over the years, employees already represented by NTEU at the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the Securities and Exchange Commission and the National Credit Union Administration have benefited from strong pay and benefits packages, telework, flexible work schedules and much more.

This proven track record made NTEU representation the obvious choice for the economists, attorneys, examiners, analysts and other CFPB personnel who are now part of NTEU. And these employees know the importance of making an informed decision—they are tasked with ensuring consumers have the information they need to make informed financial decisions.

Now that CFPB employees have put NTEU to work for them, the union is bargaining a first-ever contract at the agency that covers issues of concern to employees. They include travel policies and benefits, pay, telework, office space performance appraisals and more.

Every NTEU member benefits each time a new member joins the union. In 75 years, NTEU has gone from a small, regional group of employees at a single federal agency to the largest independent union in the federal sector. And NTEU intends to keep growing, fighting, getting stronger and improving federal agencies for their employees and the American public.

Standing Together

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Harnessing the sense of unity shared by NTEU members, the union launched its “I Am NTEU” campaign in 2012, giving chapters a creative outlet to express the pride they have in being part of NTEU. The hand-held signs chapters received and passed out to members traveled far and wide. Members took their NTEU spirit to mountaintops outside Seattle and baseball stadiums in San Diego and St. Louis. They were photographed across the pond at Paris’ Eiffel Tower and at Munich, Germany’s Oktoberfest. NTEU members took a bite out of the slogan on cakes, wore “I Am NTEU” t-shirts and displayed the slogan as wall-size posters. With more than 1,000 photos snapped featuring the sign, to say NTEU members embraced the campaign would be an understatement.

In the end, the “I Am NTEU” campaign exemplified what NTEU is all about—thousands of individuals with different experiences, talents and skills, all joining together in solidarity. Together, they are NTEU.

As NTEU celebrates its 75th anniversary, it is with the clear understanding that we have grown stronger and accomplished much because we are united.

NTEU members believe in solidarity and being part of something bigger than themselves. It is with this collective voice that NTEU will effectively advocate for federal employees for another 75 years.



Looking to the Future

Protect



“As difficult as these times are, and they are, what we also know is, we have seen many administrations and many members of Congress come and go. And we were here long before they were, and we will be here long after they are gone.”

President Kelley, *Washington Post*, August 8, 2011

It is clear as we move forward as federal employees and as a union that many challenges remain. Sequestration must be stopped and steps taken to restore needed funding to government agencies. No federal employee should ever serve another unpaid furlough day. The three-year pay freeze needs to end.

Unless halted by Congress, the sequester will last until 2021. The damage would be widespread and long lasting. Government agencies will be emptied of resources and unable to meet their missions. The best and the brightest will leave government service. The most highly respected civil service in the world will no longer be.

Bringing sequestration to an end is a formidable goal, but NTEU and its members can get there. NTEU has faced big fights in the past, and through strength and persistence, the union has prevailed.

As NTEU presses for an end to sequestration, there is another longstanding practice that must stop: the outrageous salary reimbursements the public is on the hook to pay contractors. In place for years, and steadily growing, these reimbursements can reach nearly a million dollars per individual contract employee. In a difficult fiscal environment, the widespread practice of contracting out deserves a serious look, and legislative progress is being made on scaling back these reimbursements. The key to a stronger workplace, NTEU has always believed, is allowing the voices of employees to be heard and respected. NTEU uses every available forum to accomplish that, including turning labor-management collaborative forums into places where meaningful issues can be addressed and resolved.

Together, NTEU and its members are stronger and more resilient than our opponents believe. Despite today's challenges, it is easy to feel confident about the future when you have NTEU's past.

Our Agencies



DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

- FARM SERVICE AGENCY
- FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE

DEPT. OF COMMERCE

- PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

DEPT. OF ENERGY

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

- ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
- ADMINISTRATION ON COMMUNITY LIVING
- FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION
- HEALTH RESOURCES AND SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
- INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE
- NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS
- OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
- PROGRAM SUPPORT CENTER
- SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

DEPT. OF HOMELAND SECURITY

- U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION

DEPT. OF THE INTERIOR

- NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DEPT. OF THE TREASURY

- BUREAU OF ENGRAVING AND PRINTING
- BUREAU OF THE PUBLIC DEBT
- DEPARTMENTAL OFFICES
- FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SERVICE
- INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
- OFFICE OF CHIEF COUNSEL

- OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER OF THE CURRENCY

- TAX AND TRADE BUREAU

CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION BUREAU

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

NATIONAL CREDIT UNION ADMINISTRATION

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

- OFFICE OF DISABILITY ADJUDICATION & REVIEW

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