



**For Immediate Release**  
**March 5, 2007**

**Contact: Dina Long**  
**(202) 572-5500**

## **Kelley Traces Severe TSA Problems To Lack of Employee Bargaining Rights**

**Washington, D.C.**—The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is beset by low morale, extraordinarily high turnover and a variety of other serious problems that stem directly from its management decision to deny employees basic workplace rights, the leader of the union representing thousands of border security workers told Congress.

In testimony delivered to a Senate subcommittee, President Colleen M. Kelley of the National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU) warned that “in a workplace without bedrock protections” for employees, “morale will suffer, which in turn will adversely affect efficiency.”

The hearing on TSA workforce issues was conducted by the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce and the District of Columbia. Chaired by Sen. Daniel Akaka (D-Hawaii), the subcommittee is examining legislation that would extend collective bargaining rights to TSA’s Transportation Security Officers (TSOs). NTEU strongly supports such a move.

At TSA, employees have been denied basic fairness, NTEU said. “TSA has been plagued by personnel problems never seen in any federal agency...And years of massive turnover has wasted millions of taxpayer dollars in recruitment and training costs,” President Kelley said.

She continued, “In order for any federal human resources management system to be accepted by employees as fair and ultimately successful, it is essential that it incorporate a number of basic federal employee protections.”

**(MORE)**

## **Kelley Supports TSA Collective Bargaining Rights—Add One**

These include the right to organize and bargain collectively; a scope of bargaining and bargaining process that allows meaningful negotiations over working conditions; employee access to an adverse action and appeals process that treats employees fairly and ensures that their due process rights are protected; reasonable notice to TSOs and an opportunity to make a meaningful reply before disciplinary action is taken against them; and the right to appeal agency actions to an independent adjudicator whose decisions are subject to judicial review and in which agencies bear the burden of proving just cause for actions taken against employees.

These are the principal elements NTEU successfully fought a federal court battle to retain for employees of the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in the Department of Homeland Security.

Anything less, she warned the subcommittee, flies in the face of the dictates of basic fairness, equity, security and stability.

The NTEU leader firmly rejects administration concerns that collective bargaining would limit management flexibility at TSA. Such concerns “have been totally discredited by the record of the organized workforces at other DHS bureaus,” she said.

“Indeed,” Kelley stressed, “it is insulting to the hundreds of thousands of dedicated public safety officers with collective bargaining rights—from CBP Officers and Border Patrol Agents at DHS to local police and firefighters and your own Capitol Hill Police Force—to suggest that they would put their union rights before the national security interests of the country.”

NTEU is the largest independent federal union, representing some 150,000 employees in 30 agencies and departments, including more than 15,000 in CBP.

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