



NEWS RELEASE

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NTEU's Campaign on DHS Issues, Including LEO Status, To Include Newspaper Ads, Capitol Hill Visits by Frontline Employees

Washington, D.C.—The National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU), as part of an aggressive and ongoing campaign, is reaching out to Congress and Washington-area taxpayers this week about serious issues impacting the ability of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to effectively pursue its national security missions.

A highly-visible part of that campaign will occur Tuesday and Wednesday, said NTEU President Colleen M. Kelley, in the form of advertisements in two widely-read morning Washington newspapers—the *Examiner* and the *Express*—talking about the continuing unfairness of denying to certain DHS employees the law enforcement officer status they earn by their work every day. “Once the American public understands exactly what these frontline officers do each day, they will support our efforts to secure equitable treatment,” said Kelley.

The *Examiner* and the *Express* are distributed free and have a broad readership among morning commuters. In addition, NTEU materials on this issue will be distributed at three major Washington Metro stops in the morning—Union Station, Capitol South and Federal Triangle.

LEO status carries with it certain retirement rights that are widespread throughout the federal sector but that have been denied to officers in DHS's Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP)

(MORE)

NTEU Leaders Address Concerns in DHS--Add One

despite the clear law enforcement nature of their homeland security work and the well-documented dangers that accompany it.

“NTEU is turning up the volume in our fight for LEO status and our opposition to the current state of affairs at Homeland Security’s Bureau of Customs and Border Protection,” said President Kelley.

Dozens of leaders from NTEU chapters around the country representing the men and women who guard the nation’s borders and facilitate more than \$1.3 trillion in annual trade will meet on Wednesday and Thursday in Washington. These NTEU members, over the course of the two days, will meet with their congressional representatives on a number of DHS-related issues, including LEO status. Additionally, they will present to their elected officials petitions from CBP front-line workers calling for congressional support of LEO status.

Other issues on their agenda will be the continuing refusal of DHS leadership to meet with NTEU to work out acceptable personnel regulations in the wake of federal court rulings in an NTEU-led suit that key segments of the system sought to be implemented by DHS are illegal; the need to boost staffing, which remains woefully inadequate; and the importance of rethinking a DHS initiative known as ‘One Face at the Border’ which is resulting in the loss of specialized expertise among former employees of the Customs Service, Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. Each of these agencies was among the 22 federal agencies combined to form DHS.

Under ‘One Face at the Border,’ President Kelley said, not only are the benefits of employees’ specialized expertise being lost, Customs and Border Protection Officers are being asked to perform functions for which there is insufficient training. “Virtually all the employees believe that the ‘One Face’ initiative is a major step backward,” the NTEU leader said. “The agency simply has got to address this.”

“If allowed to continue unchecked, such problems will lead to recruitment and retention problems and are a threat to our homeland security,” said President Kelley.

NTEU is the largest independent federal union, representing 150,000 employees in 30 agencies and departments, including some 14,000 in CBP.

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For more information visit www.CBPunion.org

REMINDER: There will be a press briefing at 11 a.m. Wednesday at the L’Enfant Plaza Hotel with President Kelley, NTEU chapter leaders and Scott Lilly of the Center for American Progress. Lilly is the author of a study identifying critical issues that need to be addressed in the Department of Homeland Security.