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1750 H Street N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20006 • (202) 572-5500

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**Contact: Dina Long, Ext. 7058
Sheila McCormick, Ext. 7034
Mike Drapkin, Ext. 7011**

NTEU's Kelley Calls on House to Reject Bills to Establish 'Sunset' Commissions

Washington, D.C.—The leader of the nation's largest independent union of federal workers today called upon the full House of Representatives to reject two bills that would establish 'sunset' commissions to review federal agencies and programs to determine if they should be ended or changed. A vote is scheduled on the legislation Thursday.

President Colleen M. Kelley of the National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU) described the bills—H.S. 5766 and H.R. 3282—as “an unprecedented and extremely unwise transfer of power from the Legislative Branch to the Executive Branch.” Last week, the House Government Reform Committee approved both bills on largely party-line votes.

With passage of either of these bills, President Kelley said, “Congress would, in essence, surrender its oversight duty and turn over decisions about the function and structure of the federal government to an unelected commission which could conduct its deliberations without openness or accountability.” She added: “This is very dangerous territory for our country.”

In a letter to members of the House last week, the NTEU leader said that while efficiency in government and the elimination of waste are “laudable goals,” the two bills “take the wrong approach.”

(MORE)

Kelley Calls for Defeat of Sunset Legislation--Add One

The problem, she said, is that “they open the door to eliminating programs and agencies based on philosophical opposition to their mission rather than their failure to perform their mission.”

There are better ways to approach these important questions, the union leader said, in calling on Congress to “explore authentic means to promote better government.”

As the largest independent federal union, NTEU represents some 150,000 federal workers in 30 agencies and departments.

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