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## **Kelley: House Approval of 2006 Treasury Funding Bill Boosts Prospects For Fair Competition for Federal Jobs, Better Use of Taxpayer Money**

**Washington, D.C.**—The leader of the nation’s largest independent union of federal workers today welcomed approval by the full House of Representatives of legislative language that seeks to ensure that federal agencies use a fair public-private competition process before federal jobs are turned over to the private sector.

In approving the fiscal 2006 Transportation-Treasury Appropriations bill, the House voted to accept an amendment offered by Rep. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) that would require the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to develop processes for government contracting that are more fair to federal workers and that are better for taxpayers.

President Colleen M. Kelley of the National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU), who has been leading the fight against the wholesale contracting out of federal jobs to private companies, applauded the House action, saying that approval of the Van Hollen amendment “will go a long way toward ensuring a fair competition process that spends taxpayer dollars wisely.”

“This amendment will force OMB to revisit the contracting out rules,” said Kelley, “and put in place a process that is open and fair and that truly allows federal employees to demonstrate that they deliver the most professional, efficient, and cost-effective government services.”

**(MORE)**

## **Kelley Welcomes House Approval of Funding Bill—Add One**

The NTEU president also voiced her pleasure at inclusion in the fiscal 2006 funding bill of language that would provide the same 3.1 percent pay raise for federal civilian workers as is proposed for members of the military—the administration has proposed only a 2.3 percent raise for its civilian workforce.

“Approval of the 3.1 percent pay raise clearly shows that the House understands the value of the work that federal employees do every day,” said Kelley, “something the administration does not seem willing to acknowledge.”

The appropriations bill also contains language that would prevent the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) from closing 68 Taxpayer Assistance Centers (TACs) without an analysis and report to Congress on the impact of such a move by the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA).

Along with NTEU, TIGTA and other internal and external groups, as well as members of Congress, have expressed serious reservations about IRS plans to cut back sharply on its customer service.

“The House bill addresses in a positive way a number of very important issues for federal workers,” President Kelley said. “I’m pleased to see the growing bipartisan support for those who perform the work of the federal government.”

The Van Hollen amendment would prohibit agencies from using funds to implement the contracting procedures put into place when OMB revised its Circular A-76 in May 2003. Those procedures make it easier to eliminate federal jobs and turn them over to private contractors.

Under the language, federal agencies would not be prohibited from contracting out work, but OMB would have to go back to the drawing board to develop an A-76 process that is fair to federal workers.

The same amendment was approved by the House in each of the past two fiscal years, but was stripped from omnibus funding bills each year, in line with the administration’s relentless and continuing drive to privatize the federal workforce.

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