

The New Chapter 098



Effective Leadership, Fair Pay, Employee Input Keys to Agency Recruitment and Retention

Washington—There are no secrets to attracting, developing and retaining key employees in public service, the head of the nation's largest independent union of federal employees has told the independent Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Oversight Board.

In testimony submitted to a meeting of the nine-member board today, President Colleen M. Kelley of the National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU) said what is required is for the IRS to move away from practices that tell employees their efforts are not valued and to embrace practices that carry the message that their commitment to the agency's mission is recognized and appreciated.

The latter category, she said, includes making sure the IRS is effectively led at every level, that employees have opportunities for meaningful input into decisions that affect them, and that the workforce enjoys a fair compensation system that is credible and transparent and which generates teamwork. That calls for fair and competitive pay.

"These are the thing I believe will have the most impact on the quality of applicants and the motivation, performance, loyalty and success of federal workers," President Kelley said. The Oversight Board meeting was focused on how the federal government, and in particular the IRS, can best attract, develop and retain qualified employees.

President Kelley warned of the existence of a variety of practices—not only in the IRS but across government—that present "a host of difficult challenges" for agencies, including several that are widespread.

These include efforts to privatize an increasingly large number of government functions; inadequate salaries that lag far behind those in the private sector; and a continued unwillingness of many federal agencies to utilize existing authorities and administrative personnel rules to help retain thousands of dedicated, skilled public servants and their institutional knowledge.

President Kelley emphasized NTEU's long-standing opposition to the agency's use of private companies to collect taxes. "This misguided proposal," she said, "is a waste of taxpayer dollars, invites overly aggressive collection techniques, jeopardizes the financial privacy of American taxpayers and may ultimately serve to undermine efforts to close the tax gap." The gap between taxes owed and paid currently is put at more than \$300 billion, and is growing annually.

Kelley reiterated NTEU's strong support for S. 335, introduced by Sens. Byron Dorgan (D-N.D.) and Patty Murray (D-Wash.), which would force the IRS to immediately and permanently suspend

its use of private tax collectors and prohibit the use of any IRS funds for that purpose.

The submitted testimony also asked serious questions about the administration drive to establish untested pay-for-performance systems in place of the General Schedule pay system. "There is no hard evidence that these alternative systems work," President Kelley said. "To the contrary, there is some evidence that they do not work."

Including at the IRS where a paybanding system is in place for IRS managers. This system is widely disliked by the managers who must work under it and has been criticized by the agency's inspector general who concluded that the system discourages both managers and non-managers from applying for managerial positions.

And she called on the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to do far more to encourage agencies to use existing flexibilities such as telecommuting; special salary rates; recruitment and retention bonuses; cash and time off awards for notable performance; and student loan repayment programs.

As the largest independent federal union, NTEU represents 150,000 employees in 31 agencies and departments.

The New Chapter 098 Board of Directors

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Your Opinion Counts

Memphis Accounts Management will be implementing a local program to give AM employees the opportunity to voice their ideas and/or opinions. The program "Your Opinion Counts" will provide a framework to

reward employees for their ideas and/or opinions that impact local teams, departments, or product lines. Also included in that framework will be a method to assist employees with the "I Suggest" process to

ensure any ideas or suggestions that may have a larger scope and impact on other directorates is submitted for consideration. Look for flyers and more information about this in the upcoming month.

NA article 5, Sec 4(I)



The Employer will issue a notice to all employees on a semi-annual basis that states, in part, the following:

1. Employees have the right to be represented by the Union in an examination in connection with an investigation if:
 1. (a) the employee reasonably believes that the examination may result in disciplinary action against the employee; and
 2. (b) the employee requests such representation; and
2. Employees may exercise this right if the above conditions are met whether the employee is the subject of the investigation (including a background investigation) or is a third party witness. The IRS fully supports the aforementioned right.



The New NTEU Chapter 098

Newsletter Name

Please help the New NTEU come up with a name for their Newsletter. This contest will run through May 30, 2008. The winner will be selected on June 15, 2008 and will receive a digital camera.

Stop by the New NTEU Union office to enter the contest.

NTEU Members Only

Where Does Your Membership Dues Go?

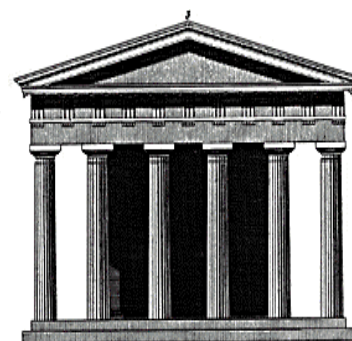
Do you know where your membership dues go? Do you know what your dues are used for? There has been a lot of speculation about that subject and most if it is incorrect! So, let me set the record straight about union dues!

In 1991, at the national convention, held in Denver, Colorado there was a vote on membership dues being increased, based on a sliding scale. This was done to eliminate the need for raising union dues in the future. Before 1991 and at every national convention there would be a debate about raising union dues and sometimes the dues would get raised and sometimes they got voted down. Since 1991 NTEU has not asked that the dues be raised because of the sliding scale which raises dues when employees get promotions, step increases, COL raises etc.

Union dues are the funds that support most union activities. Without union dues, labor unions could not survive nor could they defend the employees they represent. All union dues paid by employees are sent to the national NTEU. The national sends back one dollar for every member in the local chapter. So, if we have 900 members who have paid on average about 10.00 which, is equal to 9000.00 dollars a pay period for a monthly total of 18,000.00 dollars! NTEU, chapter 098 would receive 900.00 dollars a pay period or 1800.00 dollars a month.

The money the National NTEU receives from its members pays for salaries for those who are representing union members on a full time basis. Those members usually do not work for the government. National NTEU also pays for lawyer's fees, partial arbitration fees, expenses for briefs and filings of motions, traveling and negotiation expenses as well as office expense and publication expenses. Some members think that their money is being used for lobbying for different laws that affects members work status and for pay raises. This is not true; NTEU can not use membership money for lobbying efforts. NTEU uses another organization for lobbying. That organization is called TEPAC. TEPAC gets its money from donations from those who both joined and pay for yearly membership or those who support TEPAC through charitable contributions. This is the money that is used in lobbying efforts for better pay, health benefits and laws that improve members working conditions as well as keeping members working. Membership dues are the reason we will not spend money on non-members. NTEU will represent non-members until it costs money. NTEU will not use membership dues to pay for any non-member's defense because that would not be fair to those who joined and pay dues.

As I alluded to before, our local chapter receives about 1800.00 a month, which is one dollar for each member Chapter 098, has signed up. We also have to pay part of the arbitration costs. If Chapter 098 wins an arbitration case 098 stills has to pay 25% of the cost of arbitration and if we lose we pay 75% of the cost of arbitration fees. Chapter 098 also uses the member's money to pay for stewards training, legislative conferences, membership meetings, supplies etc. Chapter 098 also gives a free Christmas party every year for members and this is James Hull's idea to give something back to the membership. The last party cost around 6,000.00 but it was free to every member and according to the members who attended the party, everyone enjoyed themselves and ate heartily. Your membership dues help you to get the best representation possible and the most benefits of any federal union! JOIN NTEU today!!





THE PRESIDENTS CORNER

Working to Bridge the Gap between, NTEU and MIRSC

Although I have truly been a bit preoccupied following the election dealing with matters of the chapter, I now know that we have a great deal of work ahead of us. We are in progress of repositioning this chapter to provide better protection of your rights through representation and to exemplify exceptional courage to confront all problems, changes, and challenges head on. We are the people who constantly face changes, disappointments and victories.

I want to encourage you all to never give up, never give in, and for goodness sake never give out. I believe that the best is yet to come. I believe beyond all expectations that this new NTEU 98 administration is willing and ready to work together with the new directors and territory managers of this campus. We have all been afforded a tremendous opportunity through our respective platforms to make a difference. We must empower ourselves and others to reach for our goals and to overcome limitations while striving to fulfill the highest possible career goals at the IRS.

To quote Albert Einstein in stating "my fear for life is that technology will overcome humanity." He's warning us to never lose sight of human life or rights. He saw then what you and I are seeing now. Ladies and gentlemen the greatest and certainly the most important commodity within the service are the employees, including management, not the computers or telephones. Without the employees the department of treasury would cease operations. However, all is not lost the decisions that IRS makes in 2008 will make all the difference. It is an undeniable truth that one year from now your life will be better or it will be worse, but it won't be the same.

No matter where we start on the socioeconomic scale, we all have the potential for prosperous and fulfilling lives if we take responsibility for our successes. Always reach for higher achievements. Prepare yourself as worthy recipients for a much greater reward by continuously making adjustments so that you are always on track to enjoy the quality of life. And hold your head up, you are the key here at the Memphis Service Center. It's not the computers or the telephones, it's you and don't forget it.

PS. Congratulations to all of the new heads of office within NTEU and management. We can do great things together in 2008 by working together.

James A. Hull, Jr.

President of the New NTEU Chapter 98

Memphis Service Center