



PRIORITY



(2017 Legislative Advisory Committee)

2017 Legislative Priorities Are Set For Action

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NTEU's Legislative Advisory Committee met in Washington, D.C. this month, to recommend the union's priorities for the 115th Congress. After discussing several critical issues facing federal employees, the committee recommended to NTEU President Tony Reardon five priority legislative issues: Fair Pay, Protecting Retirement Benefits, Affordable Health Care, Ensuring Workplace Fairness and Achieving Agency Missions. The Legislative Advisory Committee consisted of NTEU National President Reardon, Legislative

& Political Director Maureen Gilman and 11 chapter leaders from across the country including our very own Sharon Wilbert! Let us talk about the first issue: Fair Pay. Federal employees have suffered significant erosion in compensation since 2011. Federal workers had their pay frozen in 2011, 2012 and 2013 and then got below market raises of 1 percent each in 2014 and 2015. For this year, they received a meager 1.3 percent raise, which included a locality pay increase for the first time in six years. In contrast, private-sector

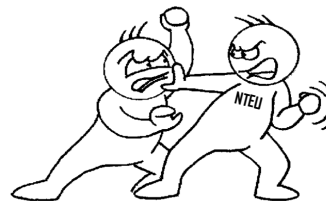
wages have risen by an average 10.6 percent in the past six years, according to the Department of Labor's Employment Cost Index. The administration is proposing a 1.6 percent pay raise for federal employees in calendar year 2017. That's simply not enough. The federal workforce has already contributed \$182 billion toward deficit reduction over the past 10 years due to pay freezes, the inadequate raises and higher retirement contributions for new employees. NTEU will work with Congress to provide a fair and adequate pay raise

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FAIR WARNING

NTEU supported 106 members of Congress who were urging the President to reconsider the plan to implement an immediate federal hiring freeze. In a letter to President Trump, the representatives led by Rep. Stephen F. Lynch (D-Mass.), warned that a hiring freeze will decrease transparency, efficiency and accountability in the federal government. Members of Congress revisited a Government Accountability Office (GAO) report concluding that a series of hiring freezes disrupted agency operations and diminished federal oversight of programs. That loss of mission-critical skills, heightened by an approaching

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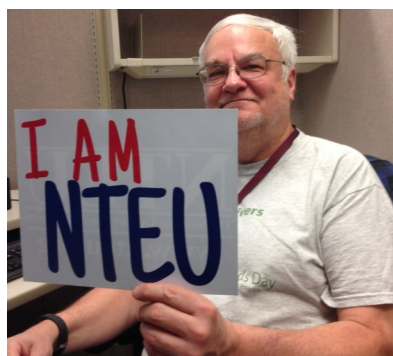


This Month's Highlights!

- Legislative Priorities Set
- Hiring Freeze Initiated
- Budget Resolution Passed
- Fair Warning
- Member Retirement



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Chapter 14 • St. Louis, Missouri



Congratulations to Chapter 14 Member **Dennis J. Honkomp** for his 15 years of Service! Please join us in bidding him farewell because January 31st, is last day. Now that's something to smile on!



Legislative Priorities Continued...

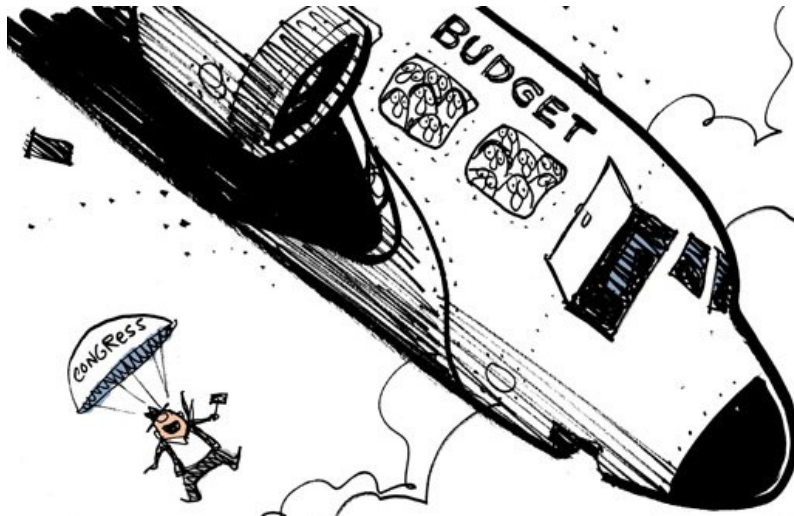
for calendar year 2017, including a locality pay adjustment. Chapter 14 also supports a bill soon to be introduced by Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-Va.) to provide a 5.3 percent federal pay raise next year. Then we have the issue of Ensuring Workplace Fairness. Collective bargaining rights for federal employees are much narrower than those in the private sector. No federal employee is forced to join a union or pay dues, but federal unions are required by law to represent every employee in

the bargaining unit regardless of membership status. Federal union members are also legally barred from striking. Chapter 14 opposes H.R. 4461 that would prevent federal employees from deducting labor organization dues from their paychecks, undermining federal unions and their efforts to provide effective representation to federal workers. S. 2245 and S. 2246 and H.R. 4083 would prevent Internal Revenue Service (IRS) employees from receiving union representation. Ensuring that

personnel actions are free from inappropriate political motivation is critically important to maintaining a civil service free of the spoils system. Eroding collective bargaining rights and due process rights would discourage whistleblowers from reporting waste and abuse due to fear of retaliation. NTEU Chapter 14 will work to defeat H.R. 4461, S. 2245, S. 2246 and H.R. 4083 and to maintain the modest due process and collective bargaining rights currently in place for the federal workforce.

Congress Passes FY 2017 Budget Resolution

FAIR WARNING Continued...



(Congress Jumping Ship and Leaving Employees Hanging)

Congress has set broad funding guidelines for fiscal year (FY) 2017 in the budget resolution that has now passed both the House and the Senate. The congressional resolution provides for “reconciliation,” a procedure allowing future budget bills to be considered without a filibuster in the Senate, and to pass by a lower threshold—a 51-vote majority rather than the typical 60-vote requirement. House and Senate leadership have

indicated this procedure will be used on legislation not yet introduced to repeal the Affordable Care Act. The resolution provides guidelines to congressional committees, including a Jan. 27 deadline for certain committees to report on legislation repealing the Affordable Care Act and to produce targeted savings. NTEU will be working to ensure that such legislation does not have a negative impact on federal employees.

retirement wave, shows a serious danger. “A hiring freeze will increase backlogs, decrease service quality and frustrate Americans seeking help from their government,” said Reardon. “Empty desks, dormant computers and ringing telephones don’t deliver vital public services and safeguard our nation, federal workers do.” Effective December 8th, 2016, there is no longer a requirement for creditable service to be “substantially continuous” for career tenure purposes and references to the 30-day break in service rule will be eliminated. As a result, under the new rule, all federal service will be credited toward career tenure regardless of whether or not there is a break in service, and employees will be eligible to receive career tenure after completing three years of total creditable service as described in 5 CFR 315.201(b). Currently, a single break in creditable service of more than 30 calendar days requires the beginning of a new three-year period, except in limited circumstances. This is a fair warning.



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A NEW WAY TO REACH CONGRESS

Introducing your new Legislative Action Center on NTEU.org.

Making your voice heard on federal employee issues is faster and simpler than ever. Here's how you can do it from your computer, tablet or mobile device:

Send an email:

1. Select an action alert from the "Take Action" box on the page.
2. Enter your ZIP code or address to review the available email. Consider customizing the alert by adding a personal experience on the issue.
3. Fill in the contact information box and enter your home email and mailing address where you vote. Click "Remember Me" to save your information for next time.
4. Add your name and click "Submit" Your opinion counts. Make sure your representatives hear it.

Make a call:

1. Select an action alert from the "Take Action" box on the page.
2. Enter your address to find talking points and your legislators' phone numbers. Click "Remember Me" so you won't need to enter your information next time.
3. Call the phone numbers provided. Follow any instructions on the page and share your talking points. Feel free to add a personal experience on issue if applicable.
4. Answer the questions on the call feedback form and click "Submit"

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