



Chapter 67

Peoples Voice

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2013 Legislative Conference

On April 25th 2013, our Chapter President Jenny Brown, First Vice President Judy Day, and Legislative Coordinator Charlene Salazar traveled to Washington D.C. and joined hundreds of other NTEU Representatives to participate in NTEU's 2013 Legislative Conference. While there they met with Congressman Rob Bishop, and with the Legislative Assistants to Congressmen Jim Matheson, Jason Chaffetz, Chris Stewart and Senators Orrin Hatch and Mike Lee. With each of them they discussed the Sequestration, explaining that IRS is already operating under severe funding reductions and sequestration will wreak havoc on their mission. They also gave examples that were given by YOU the members, on how 5-7 furlough days will affect you and your family and your ability to meet your financial responsibilities.



Chapter reps Jenny Brown, Judy Day, and Charlene Salazar speak to Rep. Rob Bishop

Another topic that was discussed was the contracting out of Federal jobs and how Congress can achieve significant savings by capping contractor salary reimbursement rates instead. Currently, government con-

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Can IRS bring in the class of 2013?

As Congress comes back in session, one can't help but ask, Is Congress going to ruin public servant careers for the class of 2013 graduates? Or even a whole generation? With all the current legislation being pushed in the House and Senate that break the backs of Federal Employees the answer becomes more confusing with every passing recess. It is clear that Congress has been looking for an answer to our budget crisis, but these constant cuts and further threats to Federal Employees benefits and pay have made these public servant careers less appealing to newly graduated students looking to pay off student loans (which Congress tried to double their interest, by the way) and maybe start a family or just begin life after graduation. Why take a job that has so much uncertainty and turmoil that you effectively have little to no say

in? Furthermore, the younger generation of employees working as public servants NOW has little to no motivation to stay in a job that has diminishing benefits and little to no recognition of a job well done. Ogden IRS services the entire nation with approximately 2,500 employees living anywhere from Box Elder County to Salt Lake County, and has a reputation of being professional and efficient in the service it provides the taxpayer, but how do they expect to attract and retain the best workers from the incoming workforce and those working now, with constant threats to Federal Employees from Representatives in their own state! (cough JASON CHAFFETZ). The fact is IRS can no longer compete with other private sector jobs like it used to. Going on its third year of a pay freeze and now the threat of losing Federal Benefits the answer becomes more clear...maybe they are waiting for the class of 2023.



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Know Your Rights

DID YOU KNOW - that you have basic rights as an employee that should be protected at all times? These rights are listed at the end of this article, and can be found in our contract on page 163 also listed as Exhibit 5-5. That is what your union representative does every day. We protect YOUR rights as afforded in OUR contract.

Many employees fear coming to the union or becoming a steward will make them 'look bad' in management's view. That they will suffer for it or that it can harm your career. That is illegal, plain and simple. You can ask some of our former Chapter Presidents, and stewards how untrue that statement is. Some have gone on to exciting career choices, after NTEU, that were obtained 'because' of the knowledge that they gained during their career while working for NTEU.

Your privacy at work is supposed to be of utmost concern, both by NTEU and Management. If you EVER hear about someone's personal or work information being discussed amongst employees that don't have the 'need to know' that is a violation.

Your manager does not have to know why you are talking to the union, only that you need to be approved to do so.

Your conversations are to be kept private, from other employees and from management.

Remember – you only need to check out with your manager and tell them how long you are going to be

and that you are going to speak to the union – the nature of your discussion will not be disclosed by NTEU – the only information that management will get is from YOU.

NTEU is here for you, the bargaining unit. We want you to know and understand the rules and laws that govern your work life. It's our goal to educate each and every one of you. Knowledge is power and with it you can gain a better understanding of both management's expectations of you and what your expectations of them should be.

Use this power to improve your work life, and therefore YOUR life. We spend more time at work than we do anywhere else, so it's important to improve it to the best of our ability.

NTEU's Mission Statement:

“To organize federal employees to work together to ensure that every federal employee is treated with dignity and respect”

They are YOUR RIGHTS and you need to be responsible to know them and to make sure they are being protected. Questions, as to whether your rights are being violated, should be directed to your steward or the NTEU office.

Statement of basic Employee Rights:

- To be treated with courtesy and tact
- To expect appropriate assistance from managers to do their job
- To work in a safe and healthy working environment
- To have job expectations explained to them
- To receive assistance in planning self-development
- To develop ideas or suggestions to improve work methods to be free to seek redress of grievances through the negotiated grievance procedure
- To receive cash awards for exceeding standards under the awards program negotiated by NTEU and IRS

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Chapter Reps. At the office of Rep. Jim Matheson

tractors can charge taxpayers almost \$765,000 for the salaries of their top five employees, nearly double what it was in 1998.

The Federal Employees Health Benefits Program was a major concern. Your Chapter representatives explained that for 2012, premiums increased by an average of 3.5% and for 2013, they increased by another 3.4%. With federal pay frozen for the last 2 years, employees in Ogden have found it increasingly difficult to afford health insurance and that as much as 6 or 7% of the federal workforce is unable to afford health insurance coverage at all. It was called on our congress members to reform prescription drug purchasing in the FEHBP which is estimated to save \$1.6 billion over 10 years.

Chapter leaders informed Utah representatives that Federal pay has been frozen since 2010, while, based on the Employment Cost Index private sector wages grew an average of 1.4% in 2010, 1.6% in 2011 and 1.7% in 2012 for a total of 4.7% while federal employees have seen no increase.

In the 112th Congress several bills were introduced that proposed changes to the federal retirement system. Proposals included calling for federal employees to contribute an additional 5 percent of pay toward their retirement with no increase in benefits, eliminating the FERS supplement available to participants who retire before age 62, and changing the high three years of service calculation to high five. NTEU

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national and Chapter 67 strongly opposed those bills and implored congress to vote against all of these bills.

At the IRS, funding reduction in 2011 and 2012 has had an adverse impact on taxpayer services and compliance activities. In particular, insufficient resources have impaired IRS' capacity to respond to taxpayer inquiries in a timely manner and hampered its ability to maximize revenue collection and close the tax gap. The lack of adequate resources for the IRS recently led the National Taxpayer Advocate to identify underfunding of the agency as on of the most critical problems facing America's taxpayers.

Chapter President, Jenny Brown, spoke at a press conference alongside National President Colleen Kelley and a few others.

These press conferences were covered in national and trade news outlets including Washington Post, GovExec, The Hill, and Federal News Radio Jenny Brown also spoke with several other reporters and expressed that we as IRS employees are proud of the work that we do and reminded them that we bring in 93% of all revenue and sequestration hurts us as public servants who only want to do our jobs and that it hurts the public who depend on us to do our jobs.

The conference ended with President Kelley emphasizing that "we need to keep on pushing, keep on speaking, keep on marching until changes comes"

To find out what you can do to help us, please take a look at our legislative page on our website www.nteu67.org, or contact the NTEU office.



Leave Sharing

The two components of Leave Sharing consist of the **leave bank** and **leave transfer**. Who is eligible for these programs? All IRS employees, except intermittent employees, are eligible to join when an employee or employee's family member has a unforeseen medical emergency that is going to require the employee to be absent from duty for a prolonged period of time and result in a substantial loss of income because of the non-availability of paid leave.

Leave Transfer Program

The Leave Transfer Program allows all IRS employees and other Federal agencies (except Postal Service, State, County and Local government agencies) to transfer accrued annual leave to approved Leave Transfer recipients.

How to apply? Complete form 12303 Leave Sharing Application, and submit to the Leave Transfer Coordinator. Applications may be made retroactively, but no later than (30) calendar days after the applicant has returned from leave required by the medical emergency. Applications received after the 30-day limit will be returned as unacceptable. Requests to waive the limit are considered on a case by case basis.

What are the requirements? You must stop using the leave transfer program when you receive no additional donated hours and when the medical emergency ends.. Before an employee can start to use leave from the Leave Sharing Program, you must exhaust all of your accumulated leave balances. While using donated leave, annual and sick leave accrues as outlined in 5 CFR 630.9

Leave Bank Program

The Leave Bank Program is a program that enables enrolled employees who have a medical emergency to request donated leave from the leave bank.

How to apply? Complete form 9058 and return it to the appropriate Leave Bank Coordinator. There are two open enrollment periods. The first begins Dec1 and runs through mid-Jan. The second will occur mid-year. A new employee may join the Leave Bank within thirty (30) days of being hired or returned to duty from extended leave.

What are the requirements? An employee must contribute the minimum amount of accrued Annual leave they earn each pay period (for example: 4, 6, 8) during open enrollment period which is good through the end of the leave year. A leave year runs from PP1 through PP 26 (or 27, if applicable).

How do you apply for Leave? Current Leave Bank members can apply for a leave donation with Form 12303 Leave Sharing Application, with required documentation to the Leave Bank Coordina-

*You can receive leave from both programs. However, leave transfer hours must be applied first before using any donated annual leave from the leave bank. *All applications are subject to Article 31 **

UPCOMING EVENTS

LABOR RECOGNITION WEEK

Ogden Amphitheater
343 25th St Ogden, UT



- LOCAL VENDORS
- PRIZES
- FOOD
- FUN

SEPTEMBER

Raptors

tickets
available
soon



Opening day June 22

NTEU⁶⁷ GAME NIGHT JULY



NTEU⁶⁷ CAMPING



WEBER MEMORIAL PARK AUGUST

For more information about the events or how to get involved...

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NTEU CHAPTER 67

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