



THE GOVERNMENT STANDARD

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for current and retired government workers and their families since 1933
American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO

Hundreds of Union Activists Rally in Support of **AFGE for TSA Bargaining Rights**

In a huge expression of support for AFGE as the exclusive union at the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), more than 500 union pilots, flight attendants, machinists, airport employees, and other AFL-CIO union members braved the winter cold and took to the streets Feb. 22 to join AFGE in what's considered the largest labor campaign in the country—the fight for better pay and collective bargaining rights for 40,000 Transportation Security Officers (TSOs).

The fired-up union members gathered in front of the AFL-CIO in Washington, D.C., just two blocks away from the White House. To the beat of the drums, the crowd chanted "Ho, ho, hay, hay, union rights for TSA!"

"What time is it?" AFGE National President John Gage asked the crowd, which responded loud and clear, "It's union time!"

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It's **Union Time** at TSA!

In a visionary and creative move, AFGE on Feb. 22 filed a petition to hold an election that would make way for AFGE to become the exclusive union representative for 40,000 TSOs nationwide.

Seven AFGE TSA Local presidents joined AFGE Membership and Organizing Assistant Director Cathie McQuiston in delivering the petition to the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA), which quickly moved to assign a docket number to the case, and in doing so, set in motion a true path to a union election at TSA.

"We have always known that the choice to unionize and the task of winning collective bargaining rights for the TSA workforce would be a two-part

process," said AFGE National President John Gage. "While it would be ideal for a TSA administrator to have granted collective bargaining rights first, the two do not have to go hand-in-hand. By settling the question of representation first, AFGE will be ready to begin negotiations as soon as the bargaining rights are established.

"The need for these workers to have one unified voice at work is unquestionable and long past due," Gage added. "Perhaps other unions don't see a need for this, so AFGE is happy to stand up and push the envelope on this issue."

"AFGE has been serving as the union for TSOs for almost a decade. Petitioning the FLRA to conduct an election is merely

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Leaving No One Behind

Like the Marines, AFGE believes in leaving no one behind. If one of our members is harmed or treated unfairly, we provide tenacious representation to make things right. And if a group of our members is paying the price for executive branch mismanagement or congressional irresponsibility, we fight for them too.

That's what happened with 2,000 of our brothers and sisters working at the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). In March, they were suddenly furloughed because Congress failed to pass an extension of the Highway Trust Fund. How did this happen? Because one senator, Jim Bunning of Kentucky, single-handedly put a hold on the Trust Fund's extension. He also blocked an extension of unemployment benefits at the same time. Taking the Senate right-wing minority's strategy of mindless obstructionism to its logical extreme, Bunning made clear he could care less about the plight of DOT employees, jobless Americans and the principle of majority rule.

As a result, our DOT members were put on unpaid furloughs, due not to any fault of their own, but rather to the actions of a former all-star pitcher who apparently was beamed one too many times. But AFGE was not going to tolerate our members losing a single cent of pay.

As I told the senators, "It is an insult to say belonging to a union is a threat to national security." I urged them to fight back against the disinformation campaign being waged by our opponents, emphasizing that collective bargaining will empower TSOs to focus all of their

Whether it's DOT employees or TSOs, whether it's our VA Title 38 professionals who have only limited bargaining rights or our SSA members who are suffering under the mind-bogglingly incompetent and destructive direction of Michael Astrue, every AFGE member needs our support.

Led by DOT Local 3313 President Antonyio Johnson, AFGE swung into action. Our leaders and lobbyists descended on Capitol Hill, our members made hundreds of telephone calls, and we achieved justice.

Working with Chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Jim Oberstar (D-Minn.), and Reps. Gerry Connolly (D-Va.), Howard Coble (R-N.C.) and John Mica (R-Fla.), we won swift House passage of H.R. 4786, legislation ensuring that the pay and benefits of the furloughed DOT employees will not be reduced. U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood also played a positive role in achieving this happy resolution of an unacceptable problem.

On March 3, two days after the furlough, our members proudly returned to work knowing that they would be made whole, despite the dysfunction of the U.S. Senate. (See p. 5 for more.)

In this same spirit of all for one and one for all, we must keep fighting with everything we have for our TSA members who, unbelievably, are still without collective bargaining and other fundamental rights. On March 17, I met with 28 senators, urging them to swiftly pass H.R. 1881, legislation granting TSOs collective bargaining rights and removing their controversial pay system.

time and energy on doing their jobs of protecting the flying public. That's because they will no longer suffer and be distracted by the discrimination and retaliation that are rampant at TSA, which constantly ranks at the bottom of all government employee satisfaction surveys. I also reminded the senators that many heroes of the war on terrorism, from the 9/11 first responders to AFGE's own Sgts. Kim Munley and Mark Todd (Ft. Hood responders) are proud union members.

Every single one of us should call our representatives and senators and tell them to pass H.R. 1881 now. We also filed an election petition with the FLRA and are aggressively seeking action on this front, too.

Whether it's DOT employees or TSOs, whether it's our VA Title 38 professionals who have only limited bargaining rights or our SSA members who are suffering under the mind-bogglingly incompetent and destructive direction of Michael Astrue, every AFGE member needs our support. The more we stand strong in solidarity with the full force of our 250,000 members, the more we will win our battles and the more government employees will be able to fulfill their missions. Let's stick together and leave no one behind! ●

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Rally in Support of **AFGE** for **TSA Bargaining Rights** *continued from page 1*

Gage said TSOs need collective bargaining rights and workplace protections now so they can focus on protecting this nation. They shouldn't have to worry about the discrimination and retaliation that are rampant at TSA. Gage said it is an insult to fire fighters and police officers—first responders to the 9/11 attacks—to say that being a union member prevents any worker from doing his or her job.

"It's time to deliver a message to the senator who played politics with national security that threats are from terrorists, not from labor unions," said Rep. Nita Lowey, (D-N.Y.), to a huge applause. Lowey, whose H.R. 1881 would grant TSOs collective bargaining rights and get rid of their controversial pay system, said the work that TSOs do is critical to the country's fight against terrorism, and they deserve a workplace that reflects that.

Several union leaders spoke at the rally, including AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler and Executive Vice President Arlene Holt Baker; Association of Flights Attendants (AFA) International



President Patricia Friend; Communications Workers of America (CWA) President Larry Cohen; National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA) President Paul Rinaldi; International Association of Machinists (IAM) General Vice President Robert Roach Jr.; National

Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) President Fredric Rolando; Transport Workers Union (TWU) International Executive Vice President Harry Lombardo; Metropolitan Baltimore Council AFL-CIO President Ernie Grecco; and AFGE TSOs Kim Kraynak, president of Local 332 in Pittsburg, and Ricky McCoy, president of Local 777 in Chicago.

Also in attendance were members of AFGE; AFL-CIO; AFA; CWA; IAM; NATCA; NALC; TWU; Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA); American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); American Federation of Teachers (AFT); American Postal Workers Union (APWU); International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE); Laborers' International Union of America (LIUNA); Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU); Seafarers International Union; Solidarity Center; Unite-HERE; United Mine Workers of America (UMWA); Utility Workers Union of America (UWUA); and other activists. ●

It's Union Time at TSA!

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a formality that will establish our union as the only legitimate representative of this long-suffering workforce," he said.

Why Now and What's Next?

If AFGE had filed prior to 2009, it would have faced a less worker-friendly FLRA board, which had dismissed a 2003 AFGE petition for election. After the Obama administration was in place, AFGE was confident that a new TSA administrator would order an election. At the time of the filing, Erroll Southers had withdrawn as TSA administrator nominee and a new nominee had yet to be appointed. AFGE did not want to wait another minute to move forward.

The AFGE petition was filed with the Washington Region of the FLRA, in accordance with FLRA procedures. In order to file the petition, AFGE had to demonstrate that it had a 30 percent showing of interest in the TSA bargaining unit, which the FLRA verified. FLRA Acting Regional Director Peter Sutton has directed TSA



AFGE attorney Cathie McQuiston (front, center) and AFGE TSO Local Presidents (l-r) Don Thomas, Cris Soulia, Dennis Acevedo, Kim Kraynak, Valorie Lacey, Ricky McCoy and Rob McNeil on Feb. 22 filed a petition with the FLRA to be the exclusive union representative at TSA.

to furnish all parties with a current list of employees and job classifications included in and/or excluded from the bargaining unit. Sutton may also require all parties to meet to narrow and resolve any issues raised in the petition.

The FLRA Regional Office then will dismiss or accept the petition for an election. If it dismisses the petition, AFGE will file an appeal within 60 days to the

full Authority, after which the FLRA has 60 days to issue a decision. If the FLRA accepts the petition, it will set the dates for an election.

"AFGE expects nothing less than a speedy FLRA decision, and in the meantime, will continue its efforts to secure collective bargaining rights for this beleaguered workforce by urging Congress to pass H.R. 1881," Gage said. ●

www.tsunion.net

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/afgetsa/>

1-866-392-6832

AFGE: Here for Your Protection

Since TSA's inception, AFGE attorneys, national organizers and national representatives have represented TSA screening personnel through TSA's internal (and non-neutral) grievance procedure, the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, the EEOC, the TSA's Discipline Review Board (DRB), and the courts. AFGE has directly represented TSOs in hundreds of cases.

Through direct representation, AFGE has not only benefited hundreds of screeners, but has had the opportunity to learn about TSA, its interpretation of law, and the resulting lack of employee rights. Each win and loss exemplify serious problems at the TSA. To paraphrase one judge in his ruling in favor of the government: although the agency's practice was not unlawful, it was in no way moral.

AFGE attorneys recently have been holding legal clinics at airports across the country, at which they hear from TSOs about legal issues at the airports and



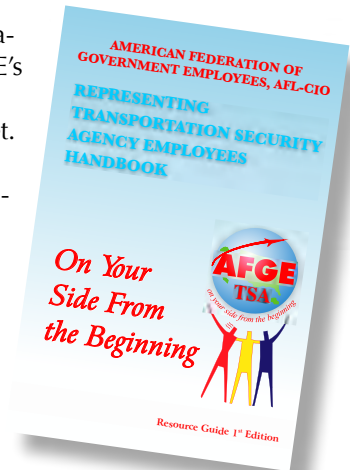
AFGE Associate General Counsel Chuck Hobbie provides information to AFGE Local 332 member Ed Loy in Pittsburgh.

personal cases, offer guidance, and when applicable, take on new cases.

AFGE created a TSA Representation Handbook that is available for download

on the Representation page of AFGE's TSA Web site, www.tsaunion.net. There, you will also find TSA policies and related resources.

If you are a TSO in need of representation, please call 1-866-392-6832 today! ●



AFGE Driven by Vision and Innovation

Time and time again, AFGE has thought outside the box at TSA.

When AFGE was told that TSOs couldn't unionize, it said, "not true," and filed a lawsuit that affirmed the right of TSOs to engage in union activities.

When AFGE was told that TSA bargaining rights would never become law, we organized TSOs and lobbied Congress to grant collective bargaining rights. We were very close to a Congressional fix when then-President Bush threatened to veto any bill which came to his desk with TSO collective bargaining rights included.

And when other unions said that "without collective bargaining, you can't bring real meaningful improvement to the TSO's work lives," AFGE said, "we, and our 12,000 TSOs beg to differ."

Even with no collective bargaining rights, for more than eight years, AFGE has acted on behalf of TSOs at TSA and in front of its Disciplinary Review Board, before Congress, at the EEOC and in the courts. AFGE actions have resulted in numerous TSA policy changes and have gotten hundreds of TSOs their jobs and/or promotions back.

AFGE already has brought meaningful improvement to the TSA workforce, and will continue to do so by pressing hard for the passage of H.R. 1881, which would permanently grant collective bargaining rights; by meeting with DHS and White House officials, stressing the message of urgency at TSA; and by being elected the exclusive union representative at TSA, so that when bargaining rights are awarded we can move quickly to the negotiating table.



AFGE National Secretary-Treasurer J. David Cox walking the walk with AFGE Local 556 member Colyn Via in Tampa, Fla.

House Passes Bill to Ensure Full Pay for Furloughed DOT Workers

Aggressive Action Taken by Union Safeguards Benefits



A FGE thanks H.R. 4786 sponsor Representative Gerry Connolly (D-Va.), as well as Chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Jim Oberstar (D-Minn.), and Reps. Howard Coble (R-N.C.) and John Mica (R-Fla.), for ensuring that the pay and benefits of recently furloughed Department of Transportation (DOT) employees will not be reduced.

On March 3, thousands of DOT employees returned to work after being on non-paid furlough for two days because an interim extension of the Highway Trust Fund was blocked while Congress debated a longer extension.

Upon learning of the furlough of thousands of its members, AFGE flew into action by aggressively lobbying members of Congress to ensure that the affected workers would not “lose one minute of pay or suffer any consequences in what amounted to an outrageous, partisan action taken by one senator,” said Beth Moten, AFGE legislative director.

“Without this legislation and without the tireless work of our DOT Local president, Antoniyio Johnson, our 2,000 DOT members would otherwise not be paid for the time they were furloughed when the Highway Trust Fund was not reauthorized in a timely fashion. This bill will ensure that the paychecks of the affected employees are not reduced. We urge the U.S. Senate to quickly follow the House and get this bill passed,” said Moten. ●

AFGE Council of Prison Locals

President Bryan Lowry recently urged Congress to expand funding and training for the nation’s federal correctional officers in the FY 2011 budget. Lowry cited a dramatic increase in assaults in the nation’s 115 federal correctional facilities as well the potential for a larger role by federal officers in guarding terrorists suspects. Three hundred forty inmate-on-staff assaults have occurred at various BOP prisons since the brutal murder of Correctional Officer Jose Rivera on June 20, 2008, by two prison inmates at the United States Penitentiary in Atwater, Calif. Lowry, joined by AFGE Council of Prisons Locals Legislative Coordinator Phil Glover, testified before the House Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and Science. CPL called for more money for salary and expenses and for building maintenance and expansion. The union also asked Congress not to privatize prisons but to support policy changes by management and support the Federal Prison Industries prison inmate work program.

DoD Deputy Secretary William Lynn Addresses DEFCON at Annual Conference

On February 12, 2010, AFGE’s Defense Conference (DEFCON) welcomed Deputy Secretary of the Department of Defense William Lynn to the address the group’s annual confer-



ence. Lynn’s visit marked the first time in recent memory that an official as senior as the deputy secretary addressed the crowd of civilian defense employees. In his remarks, Deputy Secretary Lynn noted that while DoD is aptly constructed to prevail against its many complex challenges, “Institutions are no stronger than those who work within them.” Lynn said that in order to strengthen the civilian workforce, he and the leadership of the department are eager to work with AFGE as a partner. Lynn applauded the recently improved relationship between the department and AFGE, including making a hard pitch in support of labor management forums.

Lynn’s appearance was well received by the audience. The crowd erupted in applause following lines about the need for insourcing and the end of NSPS. In his remarks, Lynn recognized that contracting out in the DoD has grown unsustainably large and that actions must be taken to bring work back within the federal government. He also recognized that any future changes to personnel policy in the department will be doomed to fail if such changes do not contain input from those most directly affected.

Deputy Secretary Lynn’s full remarks are available on AFGE’s YouTube channel, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qi7ccVvRICw>

Deal Now with the Backlog at the Veterans Benefits Administration,



AFGE Tells Congress

A FGE National Secretary Treasurer J. David Cox recently urged the House Committee to help find a strategy to tackle the enormous Veterans Benefits Administration's (VBA) claims backlog. NST Cox recently testified before the House Committee on Veteran Affairs, "Now is the time to appoint a permanent undersecretary for the Veterans Benefits Administration," said Cox, who also is a former VA nurse.

The VBA, which has been inundated with benefits claims from service members returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, is facing a monumental challenge to deliver services in a timely manner. To address these systemic challenges, AFGE worked closely with congressional leaders to enact legislation, P.L. 110-389, to modernize the VBA's disability claims process by improving quality assurance, certification and training procedures, and overhauling the current work credit and work management system.

"The Veterans Benefits Improvement Act, provides many valuable tools that will significantly reduce inventory," said Cox. "AFGE has been frustrated with VBA's inability to fully

enact the reforms presented in the Veterans Benefits Improvement Act. The urgency of putting these tools into practice grows greater with each new claim in the queue. We are facing a crisis. We need to stop rearranging the chairs on the deck of the Titanic."

AFGE also urged the Committee to ensure that VBA managers, as well as frontline employees, are provided the proper training to accurately process claims the first time. Unfortunately, as is common

now, managers without sufficient expertise are unable to carry out quality assurance duties, leading to greater errors, which in turn lead to greater delays. Therefore, it is critical that managers pass the same certification tests required of senior claims processors.

"VBA employees are committed to ensuring that veterans receive the benefits they deserve, but current VBA leaders are unwilling to commit to their employees by providing adequate training to master the complex skill of processing claims," said Cox. "All too often, newly trained employees are routinely denied 'excluded time' for training and are pushed into the production line prematurely." ●

President Gage Recognized for Work on Political Education, Appointed to the National Council on Federal Labor-Management Relations

The Metropolitan Baltimore AFL-CIO will recognize AFGE National President John Gage at its 2010 Committee on Political Education (COPE) dinner for exemplifying the spirit of the union movement. NP Gage joins the ranks of past honorees including political luminaries such as Senators Barbara Mikulski and Ben Cardin; Governor Martin O'Malley; Congressman Elijah Cummings; and labor legends Morton Bahr, former president of CWA; Leo Gerard, president of the United Steelworkers; and Gerry McEntee, president of AFSCME.

Gage was recently appointed by President Obama to the National Council on Federal Labor-Management Relations. The Council, which held its first meeting in April, will advise President Obama on labor-management issues within the executive branch.

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Sign up for AFGE Media Circle!

This Yahoo group, managed by AFGE, provides a community platform for editors and digital communicators to share ideas and information on how to create a newsletter, writing tips, and how to manage/build a Web site. Posted on this site are AFGE clip art and photos, news releases, social media articles, videos and much more that can be used in developing these communication tools. Start your free membership today by e-mailing afgemediacircle@yahoo.com to sign up. E-mail communications@afge.org with any additional questions.

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members to run for political office to push for pro-labor, pro-worker public policy.

During the AFGE National Legislative Conference, District 14 sponsored a workshop entitled, "Not Just Endorsing Candidates, But Becoming the Candidate!" Bill Fletcher, AFGE field services and education director, spoke about the need for candidate and campaign management training. "Unions have done a good job canvassing, fundraising and mobilizing members to vote for pro-worker candidates, but it is critical to now train union members to organize their own campaigns," he said.

Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner Donna Brockington, who also is from Ward 4 in Washington, D.C., and treasurer of AFGE Local 32, agreed. She became involved in union activism and local politics because she knows people who lost their jobs because they were out

sick, who didn't get their cost of living increases and who work for employers who routinely violate labor laws. "I ran for local office because I don't like injustice. I want the little guy to have a voice and I'm that voice for them," she said.

Rick Powell, political legislative coordinator of the Metropolitan Washington Council AFL-CIO said, "Union members have to become decision-makers. We have to throw our own hats into the ring. Many non-union politicians don't understand working people's issues, especially if they haven't been on a picket line or been without a paycheck for several weeks because of a strike. That empathy is an advantage in this economy."

AFGE Local 2978 President Robert Mayfield said, "I gained a wealth of information from the workshop. I'm starting to think about running for office myself, with the help of my labor brothers and sisters, I might just win big." ●

With the Washington, D.C., mayor hellbent on blocking government worker's due process rights and treating the city's workforce with disdain, and the city council's inept response to the labor crisis in the District of Columbia, AFGE District 14 sponsored a workshop to encourage more union

D.C. Mayor Adrian Fenty **Hampering** Mission of Office of Employee Appeals

The mission of the District of Columbia's Office of Employee Appeals (OEA) is to render impartial, legally-sufficient, and timely decisions on appeals filed by District of Columbia employees. However, the agency has been hampered by the office's inability to effectively mediate issues where public employees are seeking redress. The D.C. OEA has jurisdiction over adverse action for cause that results in removal, reduction in force (RIF), reduction in grade and suspension for 10 days or more.

D.C. Mayor Adrian Fenty has attempted to limit the agency's ability to service city employees by underfunding the agency and cutting staff. Unfortunately, the mayor's action against the OEA fits a pattern of anti-worker animus by Fenty, who has been violating personnel regulations, ignoring collective bargaining agreements and abandoning labor-management partnerships.

"The Fenty administration has completely disregarded employees' rights to due process as laid out in the D.C. personnel regulations," said John Gage, AFGE national president.

The 2009 Performance Accountability Annual Report from the Office of Employee Appeals acknowledged that OEA received an additional 250 new appeals, an abnormal influx in any given year. While OEA experienced this rise in claims, Mayor Fenty moved to limit its resources, eliminating two administrative judges from the agency.

The substantial rise in claims can be directly attributed to the radical anti-worker, pro-privatization agenda of the mayor. Over the course of his administration, Mayor Fenty has eliminated thousands of city personnel choking city services. The mayor also has ignored current law and turned over millions of taxpayer funds to his personal friends through private contracts.

D.C. union leaders have successfully staved off some of the mayor's deepest cuts at OEA, which would completely halt appeal hearings. D.C. AFGE Local 2978 President Robert Mayfield said, "If it wasn't for D.C. Local presidents like Johnny Walker (AFGE Local 383) and Richard Campbell (AFGE Local 1000), administrative judges would not be hearing cases today and our members would have fewer options to correct Mayor Fenty's injustices." ●

The Thin Blue Line is More Thin for Some Federal Employees

Union Sounds Alarm at 2010 Legislative Conference

*When there's trouble, they confront it.
When there's danger, they run toward it.
When there's a threat, they neutralize it.*

Their job descriptions and duties are the same but in the eyes of the federal government they are treated differently.

That would be the thousands of federal employees who carry firearms and are responsible for the investigation and apprehension of criminals but who are not granted Law Enforcement Officer (LEO) status—status that would afford them the same benefits as other law enforcement officers with whom they work side-by-side and perform the same duties. Currently, the only time these officers are classified as law enforcement officers is when they are killed in the line of duty.

During the 2010 AFGE Legislative and Grassroots Mobilization Conference, the AFGE Law Enforcement Steering Committee held a news conference to raise awareness of the discrepancies between federal police officers. “Because of loopholes in the legal definition of law enforcement officer, federal agencies can determine on their own whether they wish to classify these brave men and women as LEOs,” explained Gerald Hutt, president of the Law Enforcement Steering Committee.

No example is more poignant than that of Ft. Hood heroes and AFGE Local 1920 members Sgts. Kimberly Munley and Mark Todd. On November 5, 2009, Sergeants Munley and Todd were the first to respond at the Soldier Readiness Center after Major Nidal Hasan began a shooting rampage unlike any other seen on one of military bases. Ninety seconds after their arrival, they brought down the assailant, and Sergeant Munley suffered serious injuries after being shot by the gunman. Hasan was subsequently charged with killing 13 people and wounding 30 others.

The heroism, service, courage, and commitment of Sergeants Munley and Todd prevented the tragedy at Fort Hood from being even worse. “Yet neither of these brave officers, nor any of their colleagues, are classified as LEOs. And the

fact is, that the only time that these officers would be classified as LEO is if they are killed in the line of duty,” explained Hutt.

The Law Enforcement Officer Steering Committee and AFGE leadership called on the Obama administration and the U.S. Congress to move on the crucial need for LEO status to be granted to the thousands of federal employees who carry firearms and are responsible for the investigation or apprehension of criminals.

in the Bureau of Prisons and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, sounded the alarm at the news conference on the dire situation in their agencies.

“The BoP is in need of more staffing and more funding. Right now the inmate-to-staff ratio is 150:1 on most correctional assignments and too often can be as high as 300:1. These numbers are unacceptable,” explained Council of Prison Locals President Bryan Lowry.



Speaking is LESE President Greg Hutt, seated is NP John Gage, (l-r) 1923 LP Cynthia Ennis, BOP President Byran Lowry, CIS President Mark Whetstone, DEFCON Chair Don Hale, DEFCON EVP Patty Viers, Ft. Hood Hero Kim Munley (L 1920), ICE Member Chris Crane

There are several bills outstanding in Congress right now, introduced by Congressman Bob Filner that will rectify the LEO status issue. “Enough is enough,” said Hutt. If there is anything that our members—our everyday heroes—have demonstrated is that they clearly are subject to the same risks as other federal officers that are afforded LEO status. They have dangerous jobs and deserve recognition. We should have a one force mentality when it comes to looking at law enforcement.”

While police officers in the Department of Defense, Veterans Administration, U.S. Mint, the General Services Administration and the Federal Protective Service fight for LEO status, their brothers and sisters who do have LEO status, such as those

“Correctional officers also are unarmed inside the facility. The BoP must see fit to responsibly issue stab-resistant vests to correctional officers. We’ve seen a spike on assaults on officers with homemade weapons in recent years. Our officers need to be able to protect themselves.”

The union is calling for Congress and the administration to move aggressively to correct a host of problems left over from the Bush administration that could greatly impact homeland security. Those issues include chronic agency understaffing and lack of safety equipment for officers. “Law Enforcement communities are close to crisis stage; they’re in a critical state and we’re telling you now while there’s still time to fix it,” said Brian DeWyngaert, AFGE chief of staff. ●

2nd District National Vice President Derrick Thomas (right) and Rep. Ed Towns (D-N.Y.)



(l-r) Fredna White, chair of the Human Rights Committee and 10th District national women's advisory coordinator; National Vice President for Women and Fair Practices Augusta Y. Thomas; Former Women's and Fair Practices Director Barbara Hutchinson

Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.)



AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler



11th District National Vice President Gerald Swanke



(l-r) Lynn Cox, AFGE member; AFGE National Secretary-Treasurer J. David Cox; Senator Mark Begich (D-Alaska)



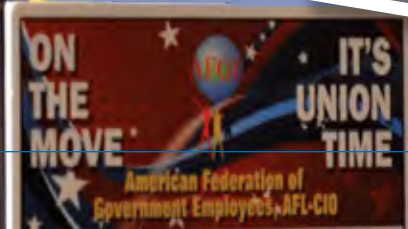
(l-r) AFGE National Secretary-Treasurer J. David Cox, National Vice President for Women and Fair Practices Augusta Y. Thomas, AFGE National President John Gage



Senator Dick Durbin (D-Ill.)



(l-r) 10th District National Vice President Roy Flores, Fort Hood Heroes Kimberly Munley and Mark Todd, AFGE National President John Gage



AFGE WOMEN Inspire the Movement

National Vice President for Women and Fair Practices Augusta Y. Thomas and 7th District National Vice President Dorothy James were honored recently for their work in America's labor movement.

"It's no surprise that Augusta and Dorothy are being honored this year from such a deep pool of candidates," said AFGE National President John Gage. "Year after year, Augusta and Dorothy give everything they have to the advancement of women and the union movement. They are true leaders in the labor movement



NVP Augusta Thomas

and are an inspiration to unionists everywhere."

In March, NVP Thomas was honored at the Coalition of Labor Union Women's (CLUW) First Annual Working Women's Award celebration for her achievements that have inspired women to strive for greater advancement in their workplace, their union and their community. The CLUW speaks out for equal pay, child and elder care benefits, job security, safe workplaces, affordable health care, contraceptive equity, and protection from sexual harassment and violence at work.

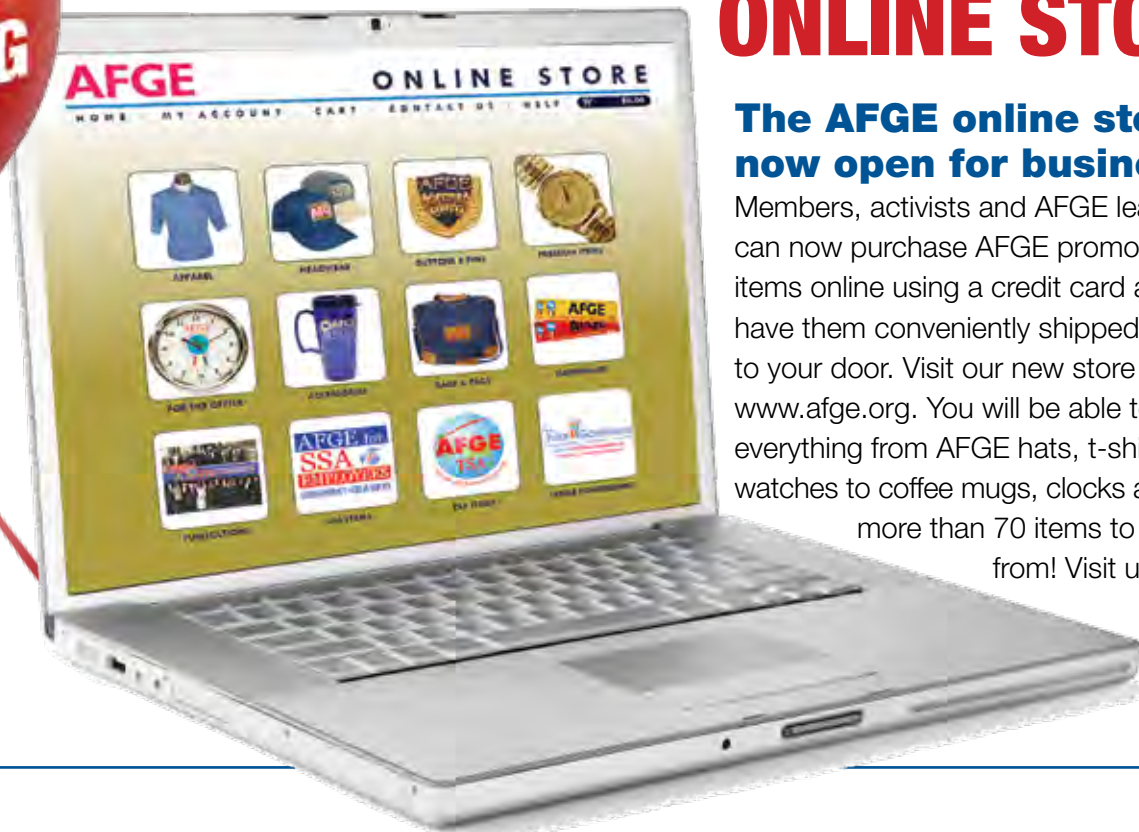
NVP James was named the 2010 Woman of the Year by the Chicago Federation of Labor at the organization's 29th Annual Tribute to Trade Union Women. NVP James is being recognized for her remarkable contributions to the advancement of the trade union movement. The CFL is comprised of more than 300 labor unions and boasts a membership of more than 500,000. ●



7th District NVP Dorothy James



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The AFGE online store is now open for business!

Members, activists and AFGE leaders can now purchase AFGE promotional items online using a credit card and have them conveniently shipped right to your door. Visit our new store at www.afge.org. You will be able to purchase everything from AFGE hats, t-shirts and watches to coffee mugs, clocks and pens—more than 70 items to choose from! Visit us today.



A Better Contract is Around the Corner

Bargaining for the Future Will Get You There

Bargaining for the Future, a comprehensive training tool to help union negotiators develop better contract proposals and provide needed support at the bargaining table, is available to you on Case Track at www.afge-casetrack.org (login is required). This all-inclusive document aids in improving the quality of our contracts, eliminating the waiver of our union's rights and increasing the benefits and protections we provide for our bargaining units.

In a break from the model contract mindset and to acknowledge that AFGE is comprised of locals that have different needs and different priorities, *Bargaining for the Future* was born. "It doesn't make sense to have one standard contract," said Charlie Bernhardt, labor relations specialist and a key lead on the creation of *Bargaining for the Future*. "What's best for one local may not be the best for another."

"Since its inception, we have been in the process of modifying *Bargaining for the Future*. We're implementing what we learn in the field into this document and currently have updates in the works to the mid-contract bargaining and ground rules sections. It's a living document," continues Bernhardt. "Our goal is to keep

the document as current as we can and makes changes as they happen. We want to ensure that we have good language that achieves the needs of each of our locals."

Bargaining for the Future:

- Provides background information on case law and court decisions that provide the legal framework for understanding the issues around which you are bargaining;
- Offers strategies to craft arguments in order to win certain demands; and
- Advises on key articles commonly found in contracts with recommendations for both minimum language and objective language.

"AFGE can be proud of its successes at the bargaining table and we have seen gains in membership numbers because of that success. *Bargaining for the Future* has helped our locals win critical contract negotiations that will affect our members for years to come," concluded Bernhardt.

You can find *Bargaining for the Future* on Case Track at www.afge-casetrack.org. If you need to register for Case Track, please contact the AFGE Office of General Counsel at 202-639-6424. ●

Are you "Inside Government"?

If you aren't listening, here's what you missed:

AFGE Leaders

National President John Gage – The union's fight to secure collective bargaining rights for TSOs (1/29/10)

National Secretary-Treasurer J. David Cox – AFGE's goals in 2010 (1/1/10)

14th District NVP Dwight Bowman – The Take Back D.C. Coalition to save city services and stand up for public workers (1/15/10)

Congressional Members

U.S. Rep. Keith Ellison (D-Minn.) – His Put America to Work Act of 2009 to create public and non-profit jobs (12/18/09)

U.S. Rep. John Sarbanes (D-Md.) – The fight for health care reform (2/5/10)

U.S. Rep. Donna Edwards (D-Md.) – Infrastructure improvements and doing right by the taxpayer (2/12/10)

Sen. Mark Begich (D-Alaska) – A recap of his first year in the U.S. Senate (3/5/10)

Other Notables

Radio show host Bill Press – The state of affairs in Washington politics, from health care reform to a proposed government spending freeze (1/29/10)

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka – The AFL-CIO's support of AFGE in the fight for bargaining rights for TSOs (2/26/10)

AFGE National Benefits Coordinator Mark Williams – All of the latest benefits for AFGE members (12/25/09)

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