

In the absence of any information coming out of the TV (yes I even tried C-Span!) I went to Baltimore MD to meet with Colleen Kelly and other local presidents. This meeting had been planned since August. Here's what you need to know, because knowledge is power, and it will help you to prepare, and make the best of a bad situation.

- Our next pay day falls on Columbus day, so you should see what will be your pay on Tuesday 10/15. ***It will not be a full pay check.*** It will be for 1 full week, 1 day, + from 1-4 hours. That is for the pay period in which the furlough began. We worked until Monday, then Tuesdays hours were for changing your voice mail, rescheduling your appointments. (From 1-4 hours)
- At this point the next payday 10/28 there are no worked hours, so no pay.
- The bill that has been going through Congress, and which passed the House of Representatives, was the one where they agreed to pay us for the days we are furloughed. That bill has not yet passed the Senate or received the Presidents signature. It is good that it passed the House, because they had been problematic. The Senate & the President are expected to pass the bills, but not until the Congressional logjam is clear.
- So we will be paid for the furlough days, but we just don't know exactly when.
- So what should you do? Call Congress!
- Go to WWW.NTEU.org and follow the links and you can email, regular mail, or phone them.
- Let them know of the financial pain this is causing you!
- Let them know you want to go back to work!
- Tell everyone you know to call Congress.
- Let them know that you will not forget come election day!

I wish I had better news for you. I know we are all hurting, and I know that there are more painful days ahead. Be strong!

- In Massachusetts, you have the right to apply for unemployment, now that the seven day waiting period has ended. You must be out of work for seven days in order to collect.
- It may take up to three weeks for your unemployment to come in.
- I can not advise you to apply or not. But I can tell you this. When we are rehired, you will have to pay that money back. And if you don't pay it back before year end, then you will have to report it, then pay it back after 1/1/14. This can make for headaches down the road. Choose wisely, but do what you have to do.
- If you have a second job, you can always work more hours there.
- If you can secure a second job now, to get you through these bad days, you need to remember to file a Form 7995 when you get back to work. It will be OK, provided the job doesn't create an ethical issue. For instance none of us can work for H & R Block or other tax preparation services. Management is aware of this crisis which Congress has created.
- Your union has also made them aware of something else. Paying all of our financial obligations is going to be a problem when we get back. Just do the best you can with a bad situation. It is beyond any of our control.

Thats the latest from here. I'll see you all after the furlough! May it pass quickly.

President Ed Filistowicz

