



Harbor Views

NTEU Chapter 23's Electronic Publication for September 2018

Don't Be An April Fool - Check Your Withholding Now

Go to the following link and it will take you to an IRS.gov web page:

[IRS Withholding Calculator](#)

You will need to enter information from your last tax return and pay stub. If you've checked earlier in the year, check again to refine your withholding. Don't wait until it's too late!

Are You in the Know? Update Your Home Address

We want to keep you aware about NTEU developments locally and nationally. We encourage you to update your contact info with the union. Here's how:

- Register on NTEU.org and update your home mailing and email address

Chapter 23 will not sell or share your contact information with anyone outside of NTEU.

Why do we ask for your home email? We will use it when there is a need to contact you without going through your government email address (shutdowns, etc.). Let us know your home email address, if you want to be in the know, or let us know the best way to contact you.

Benefit Highlight of the Month: Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program

One of the major perks of federal employment is eligibility for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program. This program enables federal and other employees to have the remaining balance of their student loans forgiven after 10 years of payments. But – there's a catch. Not every type of loan meets the criteria for forgiveness. Check the eligibility requirements and your loan type here, at the Federal Student Aid site:

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/public-service>

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Upcoming Employee Appreciation Days:

Boston LB&I: Friday, September 28 in Room 900B
Boston SBSE: TBD

Recent Chapter 23 Victories

A Chapter 23 member asked their GM how to increase their rating. After they followed the recommendations given and performed at a high level, their GM refused to increase their rating. The Chapter filed a grievance and ultimately the case went to arbitration. The agency attorneys agreed with the chapter's position and increased the member's performance evaluation. Now they are receiving a belated Performance Award!

A Chapter 23 member's telework agreement was suspended. After a grievance was filed, the suspension was found to be without cause and the telework agreement was reinstated!



Chapter Updates from President Tom McCabe

The officers and I have held many discussions regarding chapter building and development. Over the last year our office computer was performing poorly and finally failed in June. We have just replaced it and are back on line; the Facebook page and chapter website will be updated with new officer photos, profiles and current information.

Executive Vice-President Rebecca Ko, Exam Vice President Linda Candela and Collection vice-president Matt Curewitz have been updating our membership list with information secured from NTEU and adding contact information, including personal email addresses to keep in touch during the event of shutdowns, etc.

Recently, we have conducted mini-chapter meetings in Southborough, Worcester, and Hyannis and plan Stoneham and Boston in the next few weeks. We have opened these meetings to all post of duty employees including non-members. At these meetings, we have discovered that members, non-members and managers alike have common interests

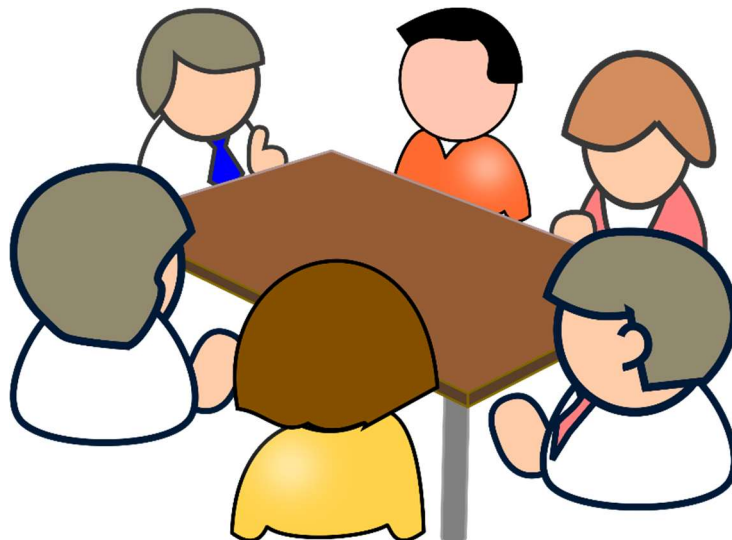
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concerning pay, benefits, including supplemental retirement as well as the federal budget, the overruled (for the most part) executive orders and other proposed restrictions on employee rights. This has afforded the chapter an opportunity for the officers to promote the efforts of NTEU on behalf of all employees concerning pay, contract updates and NTEU's opposition to some of the more punitive legislative proposals originating from the House. In fact, I was informed by Matt Curewitz that he has recruited a new member!

Additionally, the chapter promoted a presentation by United Benefits counselors on July 18 in Boston which was very positively received by those who attended. Another is scheduled for October 23 – 24 in Stoneham.

In Boston, the chapter office is now open on a regular basis with posted hours and staffed by an officer and/or steward. Further we have appointed a new LB&I steward in Boston and plan to appoint others where necessary to insure coverage.

Linda Candela, also our chief steward, has proposed training for stewards in the filing of grievances especially issues which are currently in process and common to all business units such as flexiplace agreements. Since the first of July, we believe the chapter has made significant progress in restoring outreach and promoting the benefits and protections of membership. In the coming months, the chapter plans to build on these efforts to increase membership and expand its efforts on behalf of all employees in concert with Tony Reardon and NTEU.



Are We Getting a Pay Raise?

Matt Curewitz asked this very question of National President Tony Reardon. We thought his response was interesting and informative and have reprinted it in full below:

On Sep 5, 2018, at 9:10 AM, Curewitz Matthew P <Matthew.P.Curewitz@irs.gov> wrote:

Hello,

I am the Vice President for Collections for Chapter 23, Massachusetts. I am writing to bring up an idea I had over the President's cancellation of the pay raises. As you can assume, this is a major issue with the members I have spoken to- possibly the biggest issue rank and file members have had for several years. No one works for the government out of a love of bureaucracy or because we love sitting in grey cubicles. We are here to be paid. The cancellation of the raises- after last year's reduction of the congressionally passed raise- has upset just about everyone.

In light of NTEU's recent court victories on the Executive Orders, I was wondering why we do not challenge this cancellation in court. As I understand it, the President has the power to cancel or reduce the raises due to a standard line item in the bill which gives the President this power in times of national emergency. I would argue that since a reasonable person would agree there is no ongoing national emergency that suspending our raises is an unconstitutionally vague, arbitrary and a capricious abuse of the President's power.

I am aware that NTEU is working on getting another raise in the next spending bill. However, given the recent track record, there is no reason to expect that the President would not just suspend whatever raise is negotiated. Shouldn't NTEU pursue a two-pronged strategy of court actions AND negotiations on future spending bills?

I just wanted to reach out to put this idea out there. You may have considered this already but I wanted to make sure the possibility of initiating court action has been weighed.

Thanks!

Revenue Officer Matt Curewitz
NTEU Chapter 23/Vice President of Collections, Taxpayer Service and Insolvency
118 Turnpike Rd Ste 100
Southboro, MA 01772

From: Tony Reardon
Sent: Wednesday, September 05, 2018 12:02 PM
To: Curewitz Matthew P <Matthew.P.Curewitz@irs.gov>
Subject: Re: Pay Raise

Hi Matt:

Thank you for reaching out to me on the pay issue, and for the kind words regarding our recent legal victory on the unlawful Executive Orders. I certainly agree that pay is THE major issue for all

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NTEU members--particularly given the recent three-year pay freeze, modest increases, unpaid furlough days at the IRS in recent years, and of course the never-ending increases to health care premiums.

As you know, the President announced a pay freeze for January 2019 in February when his FY19 budget request to Congress was first unveiled. Since that time, NTEU has been working hard with our friends on Capitol Hill to ensure that this plan is reversed, and that instead there is an actual pay raise in January. NTEU supports free-standing bills that would provide a 3 percent increase, as well as a pending Senate funding measure that includes a 1.9 (on average) percent pay raise (1.5% across-the-board, 0.5% increase to locality pay rates which would translate into the same pay raise amount as last year's increase). With the federal employee pay formula calling for a 2.1 percent raise, and military personnel on track to receive a 2.6 percent raise, we continue to press for a higher raise.

One important item to note is that while we stand in opposition to the President's planned pay freeze, both the proposal and the process he has utilized to advance it, are in fact provided for by the current pay laws. Under current law, Congress can always act to provide a raise, which the President cannot alter. However, if (and when) Congress remains silent on a pay raise (as is the case in the last few years), then the law provides for a method for a pay raise to be set by the President. The law requires him to inform Congress by September 1st of what amount he would like to provide (this is what occurred last year, as an example). If Congress then remains silent on a raise in appropriations bills, the President's amount is then used to calculate the increases to the General Schedule pay tables in December that are then implemented in early January to paychecks in time for the first full pay period. So, the President's communication to Congress late last week simply formalized his earlier FY19 budget's plan to institute a pay freeze. NTEU began working closely with Members of Congress at the beginning of the year on the pay raise issue because it was apparent early on that in order for there to be a raise in January, Congress would have to take action and pass legislation.

I hope this helps address your questions regarding NTEU's actions on pay. We recognize its vital role to you and your family, and will keep fighting to ensure that federal employees receive a fair pay raise in this economy in January—thank you for your NTEU membership. I also strongly urge reaching out to your chapter leaders to see how you can get involved in our ongoing pay efforts.

Thank you and take care.

This Month in Labor History

Source: <https://www.dol.gov/general/laborday/history-daze>

Labor Daze - Pride, Chaos and Kegs on Labor's First 'Day'

On the morning of September 5, 1882, a crowd of spectators filled the sidewalks of lower Manhattan near city hall and along Broadway. They had come early, well before the Labor Day parade marchers, to claim the best vantage points from which to view the first Labor Day parade. A newspaper account of the day described "...men on horseback, men wearing regalia, men with society aprons, and men with flags, musical instruments, badges, and all the other paraphernalia of a procession."

The police, wary that a riot would break out, were out in force that morning as well. By 9 a.m., columns of police and club-wielding officers on horseback surrounded city hall.

By 10 a.m., the Grand Marshall of the parade, William McCabe, his aides and their police escort were all in place for the start of the parade. There was only one problem: none of the men had moved. The few marchers that had shown up had no music.

According to McCabe, the spectators began to suggest that he give up the idea of parading, but he was determined to start on time with the few marchers that had shown up. Suddenly, Mathew Maguire of the Central Labor Union of New York (and probably the father of Labor Day) ran across the lawn and told McCabe that two hundred marchers from the Jewelers Union of Newark Two had just crossed the ferry — and they had a band!

Just after 10 a.m., the marching jewelers turned onto lower Broadway — they were playing "When I First Put This Uniform On," from *Patience*, an opera by Gilbert and Sullivan. The police escort then took its place in the street. When the jewelers marched past McCabe and his aides, they followed in behind. Then, spectators began to join the march. Eventually, there were 700 men in line in the first of three divisions of Labor Day marchers. Final reports of the total number of marchers ranged from 10,000 to 20,000 men and women.

With all of the pieces in place, the parade marched through lower Manhattan. The New York Tribune reported that: "The windows and roofs and even the lamp posts and awning frames were occupied by persons anxious to get a good view of the first parade in New York of workingmen of all trades united in one organization."

At noon, the marchers arrived at Reservoir Park, the termination point of the parade. While some returned to work, most continued on to the post-parade party at Wendel's Elm Park at 92nd Street and Ninth Avenue; even some unions that had not participated in the parade showed up to join in the post-parade festivities that included speeches, a picnic, an abundance of cigars, and "Lager beer kegs... mounted in every conceivable place."

From 1 p.m. until 9 p.m. that night, nearly 25,000 union members and their families filled the park and celebrated the very first, and almost entirely disastrous, Labor Day.

We at Chapter 23 hope that your own Labor Day was just as enjoyable! See you next month

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NTEU Chapter 23 Officers

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