

# NTEU TSA UPDATE

News and Information for TSA Employees from NTEU

Take our Survey

NTEU has received reports about a high failure rate on the annual Practical Skills Exercise (PSE) and we want your thoughts on the test.

June 16, 2009

## NTEU on Capitol Hill

### Port Columbus TSOs Lobby Ohio Lawmakers for CB Rights

Leaders of NTEU Chapter 319 (TSA Port Columbus) recently met with two key members of Congress to urge their support for full collective bargaining rights for TSOs nationwide.



Chapter 319 Interim President Dale Lemmerman, left, and Interim Vice President Tobias Dunbar met with Rep. Mary Jo Kilroy (D-Ohio) to discuss collective bargaining rights at TSA.

Chapter 319 Interim President Dale Lemmerman and Interim Vice President Tobias Dunbar visited with Ohio Rep. Mary Jo Kilroy (D), a cosponsor of H.R. 1881, the Transportation Workforce Security Enhancement Act and thanked her for her support. Introduced in April, the bill would give TSA employees collective bargaining rights by statute, as well as end PASS and move TSOs onto the General Schedule pay system, the same as other frontline homeland security workers.

Lemmerman and Dunbar agreed with Rep. Kilroy that the only way TSA will ever reach its full potential is for TSOs to have collective bargaining rights, thereby forcing

management to treat employees as equal partners in the workplace.

"PASS is hardly a fair, objective and transparent system for evaluating and rewarding employees," Dunbar said of the agency's much-maligned merit pay system. "It's bad for morale."

**"Too many good people are leaving TSA. We need NTEU representation at our airports."**

*Dale Lemmerman, Interim President, Chapter 319 (TSA Port Columbus)*

Both chapter leaders also met with representatives from the office of Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio). While no companion legislation to H.R. 1881 has yet emerged in the Senate, the TSOs were encouraged by the warm welcome they received from Brown's staff.

"I love the people I work with and when I see them being mistreated, I want to do something about it," Lemmerman said.

To send a message to your congressional delegation, visit [www.TSAunion.org](http://www.TSAunion.org).

## News Alert!

### NTEU Testifies on DHS Swine Flu Preparedness

As the number of swine flu cases in the United States continues to rise and the World Health Organization announced that the current H1N1 outbreak is now a global pandemic, NTEU went before a key Senate subcommittee today to detail important preparedness issues currently facing the frontline workforce of the Department of Homeland Security.

At the hearing of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, NTEU [testified](#) about the continuing lack of consistent guidance being given to frontline TSA and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) employees by agency leadership about their rights to wear respiratory masks to guard against swine flu while on the job.

General guidance offered to many DHS employees recommended that they avoid crowds and maintain a distance of six feet from those exhibiting illness. "The guidelines are neither realistic nor workable for these employees," NTEU said.

[View a webcast of the hearing.](#)

## **News Alert!**

### **NTEU's Success Attracts Media Attention**

Numerous print media outlets have documented NTEU's successful efforts in urging the U.S. House of Representatives to approve a bill containing language that permits TSA employees to voluntarily wear personal protective equipment during public health emergencies like the recent swine flu epidemic. The language was passed June 4 as an amendment to H.R. 2200, the TSA Authorization Bill.



A June 8 *Federal Daily* article [House OKs Bill Allowing TSA Workers to Wear Masks](#) reported that while President Kelley applauded the House vote, she also called on DHS to enact a standard agencywide policy. "While today's action is a positive step for TSA employees, there is more that needs to be done to protect the health of frontline security employees and their families. This

should be extended to all DHS employees," Kelley said.

The article [House approves provision letting TSA employees wear protective gear](#), in *GovExec* on June 5, also reported about NTEU support for the amendment, with President Kelley calling its approval necessary to protect airport personnel. "Approval of the Lynch amendment is a key step in righting an ongoing wrong," Kelley said.

H.R. 2200 passed the House by a bipartisan 397-25 vote. [Get more information about NTEU's fight to protect the health and safety of TSOs nationwide.](#)

**NTEU is ready and willing to help.  
If you have questions, call toll free  
1-866-591-5735 or e-mail [TSA@nteu.org](mailto:TSA@nteu.org).**

***Please spread the word about  
NTEU's TSA Update.***

**It's free and keeps TSOs informed about important issues.**

If you've received this from a friend or colleague, [sign up for your own copy](#).



NTEU's Mission: To organize federal employees to work together to ensure that every federal employee is treated with dignity and respect.

The *NTEU TSA Update* is a periodic electronic newsletter published by the National Treasury Employees Union for TSA employees. To subscribe or change your e-mail preferences, [visit the NTEU TSA Update subscription page](#).

**1750 H Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20006 (202) 572-5500  
© 2009 National Treasury Employees Union. All rights reserved.**