

NTEU TSA UPDATE

News and Information for TSA Employees from NTEU

February 6, 2009

Making a Difference

NTEU Saves Job; Fights Unfair AWOL Charge

In a double victory for working TSOs in south Florida, NTEU helped to rescind a removal notice given to a TSO for allegedly sleeping while on duty at Miami International Airport (MIA) and won back pay for a TSO unfairly charged with AWOL at Fort Lauderdale Hollywood International Airport (FLL).

NTEU helped Chapter 313 (TSA MIA) member Grecia Pandiella fight back after she received a notice of removal from her job for allegedly sleeping on duty while "engaged in a security activity." Pandiella claimed she was on a break and not engaged in any "security activity" at the time. She reached out to NTEU who contacted senior airport management and successfully argued that TSA should rescind its removal notice.

Pandiella praised NTEU for its passion in fighting for her and said that losing her TSO job would have been devastating to her livelihood. "I joined NTEU to be a part of a union that is really fighting for TSOs," she said. "Even though I thought all the odds were against me, NTEU stood up strong on my behalf and forced TSA to back down."

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*Grecia Pandiella,
Chapter 313*



Miami International Airport

At FLL, TSA management habitually docks TSOs 15 minutes of pay for tardiness, even if they are not a full 15 minutes late. Chapter 312 (TSA FLL) Interim Treasurer Ronald Hines decided to fight this unfair violation of TSO labor rights after he arrived at work seven minutes late and was charged as AWOL. Management also directed Hines to change his time sheet to indicate that he was 15 minutes late. Hines refused and entered the actual time—8:07 a.m.—that he reported to work.

TSA responded by docking Hines 15 minutes of pay, stealing a full eight minutes of pay. Hines immediately contacted NTEU who spoke with senior TSA management and persuaded them to drop the egregious AWOL charge and compensate Hines for the eight minutes of time he had earned.

Capitol Hill News

NTEU Charts a Legislative Path for Collective Bargaining Success

President Colleen M. Kelley recently had an exclusive, sit-down meeting with three key House members, Reps. Bennie Thompson (D-Miss.), Chairman of the House Committee on Homeland Security, Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.) and Sheila Jackson Lee (D-Texas) to discuss various legislative methods to provide collective bargaining rights to TSOs nationwide. Legislative avenues toward removing TSOs from the much-maligned PASS (Performance Accountability and Standards System) and placing them onto the General Schedule (GS) were also discussed.

"It is way past time to grant the TSA workforce the same statutory rights and protections that are afforded their colleagues at the Department of Homeland Security," said Kelley. "These legislators are champions of granting collective bargaining rights to TSOs and all three have pledged to work with us to achieve that goal."

In addition to legislative methods, NTEU continues to work with the new administration of President Barack Obama to deliver these protections through executive directive.



Two TSOs from John Wayne Airport in California met with Rep. Diane Watson (D-Calif.), second from left, at her Los Angeles office, along with NTEU Project Field Organizer John Courmane. The meeting was arranged by NTEU.

NTEU Speaks; Congress Listens **NTEU Arranges Congressional Meeting for Los Angeles-area TSOs**

Last week, NTEU organized a meeting for several southern California TSOs with Rep. Diane Watson (D-Calif.) at her Los Angeles office to talk about TSOs' urgent need for collective bargaining rights and whistleblower protections.

Watson listened to personal testimonials from several TSOs who work at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), John Wayne Airport (SNA) and Long Beach Airport (LGB) who expressed their concerns about favoritism and mistreatment in the workplace.

To organize a meeting with your congressional representative or senator, contact your local NTEU

representative.

NTEU in the Media

Kelley Defends Whistleblower Protections

President Kelley sent a letter to the *Washington Post* editor in response to a Feb. 2 [editorial](#) critical of House-approved bipartisan legislation that would strengthen whistleblower protections for thousands of federal employees in the national security arena, including those at TSA.

Read an excerpt from Kelley's letter below:

This would be the first major reform of federal whistleblower laws in 18 years. It would also address a gaping hole in existing law by strengthening whistleblower rights for those in the national security arena and the tens of thousands who work for the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

[Read the entire letter.](#)

NTEU is ready and willing to help.
If you have questions, call toll free 1-866-591-5735 or e-mail 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](#).

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