

News Release
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National Treasury Employees Union

NTEU Supports Covid-19 Legislation Addressing Needs of Federal Employees

Washington D.C. – Federal employees with jobs that require interaction with the public would receive premium pay under coronavirus emergency response legislation introduced Tuesday and endorsed by the National Treasury Employees Union.

The premium pay is one of several provisions of the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act to help protect the health and welfare of federal employees and other workers on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic around the country.

“The HEROES Act is a sign that federal employees have strong allies in Congress who clearly understand the additional risks they face as public servants,” NTEU National President Tony Reardon said. “We urge Congress to act quickly and deliver these additional protections to our nation’s civil servants who are on the job meeting the needs of all Americans during a global health crisis.”

The premium pay of \$13 per hour, capped at \$10,000 for most federal workers, would be for those who have routine contact with the public or those who must report to a worksite where social distancing is not possible and other preventative measures are not available. For example, many of the Customs and Border Protection employees stationed at the country’s ports of entry would be eligible.

Other provisions in the legislation supported by NTEU include:

- Continued telework for all eligible federal employees throughout the pandemic, plus incentives for agencies to expand their telework programs;
- Allowing federal first responders, including CBP Officers, to stay in their current law enforcement retirement plans even if they are unable to meet the physical requirements of their position due to exposure to coronavirus and are moved to other civil service jobs;
- A presumption that federal employees who work with the public and are diagnosed with COVID-19 contracted it in the workplace, for workers’ compensation purposes;
- Eliminating out-of-pocket costs for COVID-19 treatment under the Federal Employee Health Benefit Program;
- Extending the emergency leave provisions in the Families First Coronavirus Relief Act to all federal employees.

“NTEU also supports additional funding the legislation would provide to key federal agencies, including \$520 million to the IRS for costs related to COVID-19 and the extended filing season,” Reardon said.

NTEU represents 150,000 employees at 33 federal agencies and departments.