



# THE GOVERNMENT STANDARD

For current and retired government workers and their families since 1933 • American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO

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## New Fiscal Year Promises New Round of Sequestration, Budget Battles



The first year of sequestration is coming to an end, but our fight is far from over. Unless sequestration is stopped, here's what you can expect in the year ahead:

- **Reductions in Force**
- **New rounds of unpaid furlough days**
- **Pay freezes and benefits cuts**
- **Hiring freezes**
- **Across-the-board cuts to federal programs and services**

That's why AFGE needs to keep the pressure on lawmakers to end sequestration and pass a federal budget that allows agencies to function. The cutbacks and attacks we experienced this year will pale in comparison to what's coming down the pike if these budget battles are allowed to drag on for another nine years.

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## A Message from AFGE's National President *J. David Cox Sr.*

**D**ear Brothers and Sisters:

Just yesterday I got the news that DoD had agreed to cut the number of furlough days from 11 to six. And EEOC and HUD have stopped their furloughs after five days, when eight and seven were threatened. There is simply no question that AFGE's massive grassroots efforts played a role in putting an end to these furloughs for the remainder of the fiscal year. We never would have gotten DoD down from 22 to 11 if we hadn't raised unmerciful hell, and we surely wouldn't have gotten down to six by being satisfied with that first reduction. We held rallies, we sent almost 30,000 appeals to the MSPB, we rang the phones off the hooks at congressional offices, got support from community allies and generally made sure that the administration knew we weren't going to just sit back and take it.

We had an AFGE steward from Madigan Army Medical Center in Seattle, Ms. Jennifer-Cari Green, testify before the Senate Budget Committee about how the furlough actually cut her take-home pay by more than 30 percent. How is a single mother of a six-year-old son supposed to pay her rent, car note, gas, child care, FEHBP, and FERS and still manage to put food on the table when she was barely making it on her frozen salary before the furlough? Those senators had no answer to that one. When they looked at her household budget and saw that the furlough was going to send this hard-working young woman into insolvency, I think she changed a few minds. I was so proud her courage and poise. She inspires me and I know that there are thousands more just like her.

***Moving forward, I am working hard to get pay unfrozen. We've managed to block all attempts so far to extend the freeze and keep President Obama to his promise of a whopping one percent for 2014.***

We have to focus on the fact that it isn't another freeze, and by unfreezing pay generally we can move forward with several administrative changes affecting both white-

and blue-collar. With unfrozen pay, we can get some new pay localities and folks moved into higher paying localities within their commuting areas and that will be an important victory. Likewise, we've had important victories in our fight to keep A-76 privatization studies dead and buried, and we managed to keep all the various proposals for retirement and FEHBP cuts out of the Senate's budget resolution.

***Reflecting on my first year in office as National President, I can say that I have certainly been "blessed" with challenging times. Sequestration was just four months away when I was elected, and the administration and congress had already, we learned, made a deal to freeze our pay for another year. But we didn't let that stop us.***

We've added 51,947 new and reinstated members for a net increase of 7,286. There are now 284,402 AFGE members! Thanks to retirements, moves, and other decisions, we had to sign up 44,661 just to stay even this year. That shows how extraordinary our net increase is, and I am very proud of every AFGE member, leader and staff person who made that happen. Next year, we will continue to organize, organize and organize and I know we'll be successful because AFGE can achieve anything we set our minds on!

In solidarity

*(from cover)*

## End Sequestration/Close Corporate Tax Loopholes

By closing tax loopholes, there would be more than enough money in the budget to solve the country's most pressing issues. Here's a look at some of the sequester vs. tax loophole trade-offs:

**Medical Research OR Tax Breaks for CEO Pay:** The sequester slashed \$1.5 billion from NIH's budget, while a tax loophole allows corporations to get out of paying \$2.5 billion in taxes each year.

**Unemployment Benefits OR Tax Loopholes for Wall Street Traders:** Sequestration's \$2.4 billion in budget cuts means an average of \$43 less each week for unemployment benefit recipients, yet derivatives traders get a \$2.9 billion tax break.

**Head Start for Kids OR Tax Giveaways for Corporate Jets:** Childhood education programs lose \$400 million; corporate jet owners get \$370 million.

**Better Education for Kids OR Tax Breaks for Hedge Fund Managers:** \$1.7 billion less for elementary education; "carried interest" loophole costs \$1.7 billion.

**Help Seniors Get Social Security OR Lower Taxes for Multimillionaires:** Funds to process Social Security applications cut by \$286 million; wealthy families shelter tens of millions of dollars at a tax break cost of \$388 million.

**Food for Low-Income Families OR Tax Subsidies for CEO Bonuses:** To save \$40 billion, up to 6 million



Americans will be kicked off Food Stamps; a \$50 billion tax loophole allows large companies to give CEOs lavish bonuses.

**Protect the Environment OR Give Tax Breaks to Oil Companies:** \$4.6 billion in cuts to environmental protection; oil and gas companies get the same amount in tax subsidies.

**Modernize Our Infrastructure OR Give Tax Breaks to Send Jobs Overseas:** A five-year, \$464 billion investment in infrastructure would add 2.6 million new jobs a year; large companies hide billions in offshore tax havens costing \$606 billion over 10 years.

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### AFGE—THE GOVERNMENT STANDARD

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## How AFGE has helped in reducing furlough days:

**DoD:** From 22 to 14 to 11 to six

**HUD:** From 13 to seven to five

**EPA:** From 10 to seven to six

**EEOC:** Planned eight days, took five, then cancelled second round of three-day furloughs

**DHS:** None at FEMA, CIS, ICE, FPS, TSA, Coast Guard and Border Patrol

**Food Safety and Inspection Service:** Cancelled

**Department of Justice:** Cancelled

**Social Security Administration:** None

**VA:** None

**Census Bureau:** None

**Broadcasting Board of Governors:** None

**Education:** None

**Federal Aviation Administration:** 88 hours planned (varied by division), ultimately cancelled

**Food and Drug Administration:** None

**Government Accountability Office:** None

**Health and Human Services:** None at CDC, NIH

**Interior:** Three days taken at National Park Service's U.S. Park Police, remaining days cancelled

**Department of Labor:** Maximum of 10 days planned (varied by division); OWCP: six to four; None at OSHA, BLS, MSHA

**NOAA:** Four days planned, then cancelled

**Office of Management and Budget:** 10 planned, reduced to eight, seven taken

**Office of Personnel Management:** None

**Small Business Administration:** None

**State Department:** None

**Department of Transportation:** None

## Two District 14 Members Earn Degrees from the National Labor College

District 14's NVP Eric Bunn Sr. congratulates two recent graduates from the National Labor College—Octavia Hall and Ramona Hawkins, president and executive vice president, respectively, of Local 1401 Joint Base Andrews. Hall and Hawkins earned their Bachelor of Arts degrees in labor studies. Congratulations to Ramona and Octavia!



### AFGE COMM SQUAD



Find the latest on social media communication tips at [afgecommtraining.com](http://afgecommtraining.com)

## AFGE Member Testifies about Impact of Furloughs on Capitol Hill



**A**FGE DoD Local 1502 member Jennifer-Cari Green recently testified about the impact of sequestration and furloughs at the Senate Budget Committee hearing. Green, a single mother, college student and secretary at the Madigan Army Medical Center in Tacoma, Wash., was invited by Senate Budget Committee Chairwoman Sen. Patty Murray (Wash.) to share her personal story about being furloughed and the devastating effect it has had on her household.

During her testimony, Green discussed how being furloughed has made both her personal and professional life more challenging. For many furloughed employees like Green, payroll deductions do not decrease because of the loss of gross income. She explained how the 20 percent pay cut forced by sequestration actually amounts to a 32 percent decrease in her take home pay. She also discussed how she's considered dropping her health insurance due to rising costs but could not because of timing.

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## BIG NEWS FOR UNION MEMBERS



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(from page 5)

“It is extremely difficult to come to work and do justice to this job, to care for our patients with the level of compassion, patience, concern and courtesy they deserve when you know you don’t even have enough money to buy the bare necessities as a working adult,” Green said. “To know that all your efforts at being a hardworking, self-reliant, and dependable woman and mother are for naught,” she continued.

Green petitioned lawmakers to re-evaluate the furlough plans and consider herself and others like her when pushing budget reform. “We and the service members who rely on us are the victims of these budget policies,” she said. “I ask you to remember us when you vote on policies that make it almost impossible for us to support

ourselves and our families,” Green said.

Sen. Murray shared Green’s sentiments. “It won’t be easy, but the families we represent are looking to us to end the constant artificial crises and political brinksmanship that is threatening our fragile economic recovery and our national security—and work together to replace sequestration responsibly,” Murray said.

Green’s testimony garnered media attention in several publications including The News Tribune, The Fiscal Times, Family Security Matters, Army Times, and Free Beacon. Her testimony can be viewed at <http://1.usa.gov/14HKptu>. It begins at the 51:29 mark.

View photos from the testimony at <http://bit.ly/1cbHX2i>.

## See Which Senators Voted to Protect Your Right to Have Payroll Deduction for Union Dues

deduction process, your union would simply disappear. And they’re

**E**ver wonder if your senators work for you or against you? The following are the lists of those who voted to take away your right to have a union and those who voted to protect it. The vote, which took place March 22, was on a measure proposed by staunch federal employee basher Sen. Tim Scott of South Carolina to ban payroll deduction of union dues from federal employees’ paychecks.

right! Why are they trying to take away your union voice? Because we’ve fought the furloughs and sequester. We fight for pay raises, not pay freezes, and publically ask why Wall Street brokers and corporate CEOs are not paying their fair share of taxes. Big corporations and the ultra-rich fund these lawmakers’ campaigns. If they get rid of AFGE, your rights, and unions in general, there will be nobody left to stand up to them.

This vote was meant to take away your freedom of association. They believe that without the payroll dues

Even though the measure failed in the Senate, it doesn’t mean they won’t try again.



### Senators who voted to protect your right:

Baldwin (WI)	Cardin (MD)	Franken (MN)	Kaine (VA)	Menendez (NJ)	Nelson (FL)	Schumer (NY)
Baucus (MT)	Carper (DE)	Gillibrand (NY)	King (ME)	Merkley (OR)	Pryor (AR)	Shaheen (NH)
Begich (AK)	Casey (PA)	Hagan (NC)	Klobuchar (MN)	Mikulski (MD)	Reed (RI)	Stabenow (MI)
Bennet (CO)	Coons (DE)	Harkin (IA)	Landrieu (LA)	Moran (KS)	Reid (NV)	Tester (MT)
Blumenthal (CT)	Cowan (MA)	Heinrich (NM)	Leahy (VT)	Murkowski (AK)	Rockefeller (WV)	Udall (CO)
Boxer (CA)	Donnelly (IN)	Heitkamp (ND)	Levin (MI)	Murphy (CT)	Sanders (VT)	Udall (NM)
Brown (OH)	Durbin (IL)	Hirono (HI)	Manchin (WV)	Murray (WA)	Schatz (HI)	Warner (VA)
Cantwell (WA)	Feinstein (CA)	Johnson (SD)	McCaskill (MO)			Warren (MA)
						Whitehouse (RI)
						Wyden (OR)



### Senators who voted to take away your right:

Alexander (TN)	Chambliss (GA)	Cornyn (TX)	Graham (SC)	Isakson (GA)	McConnell (KY)	Scott (SC)
Ayotte (NH)	Coats (IN)	Crapo (ID)	Grassley (IA)	Johanns (NE)	Paul (KY)	Sessions (AL)
Barrasso (WY)	Coburn (OK)	Cruz (TX)	Hatch (UT)	Johnson (WI)	Portman (OH)	Shelby (AL)
Blunt (MO)	Cochran (MS)	Enzi (WY)	Heller (NV)	Kirk (IL)	Risch (ID)	Thune (SD)
Boozman (AR)	Collins (ME)	Fischer (NE)	Hoeven (ND)	Lee (UT)	Roberts (KS)	Toomey (PA)
Burr (NC)	Corker (TN)	Flake (AZ)	Inhofe (OK)	McCain (AZ)	Rubio (FL)	Vitter (LA)
						Wicker (MS)



## DoD Furloughs: Stories from the Front Line



### AFGE Local 2010, Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Fla.

**A**FGE Local 2010 rallied near the entrance of the Naval Air Station Jacksonville to protest furloughs. The employees also handed out AFGE Furlough Dollars to remind people that the money the employees can no longer spend hurts everyone in the community. The event garnered local media coverage in the Florida Times-Union/Jacksonville.com and News 4.

A restaurant owner told News 4 she's losing 40-50 percent in lunch profits and had to cut back on her employees' hours. They were forced to take three days off per week instead of two.

### AFGE Local 1882, Fort McCoy, Volk Field and Camp Williams, Wisc.

Members of AFGE Local 1882 packed Rep. Ron Kind's town hall to air their complaints about furloughs. The employees explained to the lawmaker how the furloughs hurt their morale and their families. At least two employees said they're in danger of losing their homes. "This whole thing is tragic, and we did nothing to cause it," said Local President Lois Ames. "The people who caused it are getting bigger salaries and bigger bonuses than they did before the crash."

### Local 4046, Minot AFB, North Dakota

AFGE Local 4046 rallied in protest of furloughs near the Minot Air Force Base in August.



"Mainly it's to raise awareness for the sequestration, the furloughs and how it affects the families and people that work at the Minot Air Force Base," said LP Tom Ricker. "They've been expecting us to do the same quality and quantity of work with less people, less resources. It's just getting harder and harder. Our morale is so low and we're so beaten down that people are leaving to find jobs elsewhere that are more reliable and higher pay," said Christina Mandrell, the local's secretary- treasurer.

## General Counsel's Office Teams up with Locals, Councils and Districts in Fight to Protect Workers' Rights During Sequestration

**N**early two dozen AFGE attorneys, along with other local, council and district representatives, fanned out across the country this summer to assist with furlough workshops. The workshops were put on in more than 50 locations by AFGE locals whose members are facing the drastic impact of furloughs in the name of sequestration.

Workshops were designed to answer questions, provide up-to-date information and to assist members who wish to file appeals with the Merit Systems Protection Board. Appeals are still pouring in and likely will exceed 30,000

in number. Now the AFGE General Counsel's Office is working with our locals, councils and districts to identify cases that can be fought as class actions.

"Although class action procedures have rarely been used at the MSPB, where our members' appeals have significant factual and legal issues in common we're prepared to fight for class action status," said David Borer, AFGE General Counsel. "In many cases, class actions and consolidated appeals give us the best shot to hold these agencies accountable."

## AFGE Leaders and Activists Generate Nationwide Press Coverage with Furlough Message



National President J. David Cox Sr. talks furloughs on CNN's Newsroom



Public Policy Director Jacquie Simon discusses the dangers of sequestration on C-SPAN's Washington Journal



AFGE EPA Local 704 member Elizabeth Lytle quoted in Greenwire

AFGE leaders and activists across the country have turned to the press to detail the negative impact sequestration and furloughs have had on employees and agency missions.

Through national outlets and local media markets, AFGE's furlough message has been spread by National President J. David Cox Sr. and members at the local level. Cox has garnered national press coverage through interviews with CNN, the Washington Post and other trade media outlets. In his Feb. 25 interview with CNN, Cox explained furloughs "would be devastating to employees and their families, and also would be devastating to the services they provide to the American public."

In a March 4 interview with C-SPAN's "Washington Journal" program, AFGE Public Policy Director Jacquie Simon explained the need for the federal government to re-evaluate its service contracts before making plans to furlough government workers. During the program Simon stated, "There is absolutely no rationale for having furloughs of federal employees be the first response to sequestration. It should be an absolute last resort or not happen at all."

And in the Washington Post March 13 article titled 'Federal Employees Take Sequestration Fight to the People,' Cox is quoted as saying "Our message is very clear, sequestration has got to go."

As employees continue to face furlough days, rank-and-file members and local officers also have appeared on Capitol Hill and local news programs to explain the impact of furloughs on communities, agency missions and personal households. AFGE DoD Local 1592 President Monty Lewis appeared on the July 14 airing of the "Sunday Edition" morning news program for KSL-TV to discuss the impact of furloughs on nearly 11,000 civilian employees at Hill Air Force Base in Utah, and the financial impact on the surrounding community.

On May 17 Greenwire, a publication related to energy and environmental policy news, highlighted the personal story of AFGE EPA Local 704 member Elizabeth Lytle. Lytle explained the sacrifices she would need to make in caring for her family and the need for employees to take action. In the article Lytle states, "More government workers need to be explaining to the public and Congress what's happening. A lot of people are scared to death to speak out, they are afraid

*(continued on page 9)*



(from page 8)

for their jobs. [But] the only way people are going to understand what is happening is if they hear what sacrifices we are having to do.”

AFGE DoD Local 1502 member Jennifer Cari-Green has been featured in numerous articles related to her July 23 testimony before the Senate Budget Committee. In an Army Times article, Cari-Green’s personal story was featured as she highlighted the difficult challenges government workers are facing. “I live without luxuries. I don’t do any of the things people generally think they will have to cut back on when times are tough. For my family, times have already been tough for quite a while,” said Cari-Green.

The mobilization efforts of AFGE locals have also been covered by local media outlets. AFGE DoD Local 1872 at Shaw Air Force Base in South Carolina held a rally outside of the Sumter County courthouse, which was covered by the local news station News 19 WLTX. In its coverage of the event, Local 1872 President John Sammons was quoted as saying “We as Shaw Air Force Base federal employees have been, for lack of a better word, attacked.”

The unprecedented number of MSPB appeals that have been filed, thanks to the efforts of AFGE members, has also been reported on by the press. AFGE General Counsel David Borer told the Washington Post in July, “The message here is, we’re not going to just roll over and take this lying down. We’re just getting started.”

AFGE leaders and activists have spoken with a united voice when addressing the issue of furloughs in the public eye. Countless more activists have been featured in news outlets across the country in stressing the need to repeal sequestration and end federal employee furloughs. A more complete list of media coverage can be found on the AFGE website at <https://www.afge.org/Index.cfm?Page=AFGEIntheNews>.

AFGE DoD locals also took their message to the public with a coordinated advertising campaign highlighting the local economic impact of furloughs and sequestration.



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**Michigan defense workers relieved by reduction in furlough days**

AFGE Local 2077 member and U.S. Air Force Tech Sgt. Darrell Bublitz talks with National President J. David Cox Sr.

**Furloughs Hurt Us All.**

Our community stands to lose millions of dollars as the result of unpaid furloughs at the Department of Defense - that's money that won't be spent at restaurants, stores and other small businesses.

Furloughs also undermine military readiness and support for our troops.

Sequestration created this mess. It's not the way our federal government should be run.

Newspaper ad used to highlight local economic impact of furloughs

Led by locals 987 (Robins Air Force Base), 916 (Tinker Air Force Base) and 1592 (Hill Air Force Base), the Locals placed print ads in their local newspapers highlighting the amount of money communities would lose because of the sequester.

The ads showed the true cost of sequestration from the local level by pointing out what restaurants, stores and other small businesses stand to lose as part of federal employee furloughs.

## AFGE National Leaders Honor Veterans by Participating in the “Cleaning the Wall” at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial



*Marilyn, Dave Cann, National Secretary-Treasurer Eugene Hudson Jr., Jacquie Simon, National President J. David Cox Sr., National Vice President for Women and Fair Practices Augusta Y. Thomas, Brian DeWyngaert, Verna Pitts, Bob Nicklas and Lisa Hargrove.*

members of the union’s headquarters staff. AFGE volunteers were accompanied by many other labor activists from various AFL-CIO affiliated unions.

“I was truly honored to be a part of this experience,” said Cox, who also serves as chairman of the AFL-CIO Union Veterans Council. “To participate in the washing of the Wall gave me the opportunity to show my deepest gratitude to those who have served our country so valiantly.”

In the early morning hours of Saturday, Aug. 3, AFGE national officers and staff members were joined by other volunteers to participate in the washing of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C. As the sun rose over the Three Service Members Statue, volunteers received a welcome from the Vietnam Veterans of America, saluted the memorial and observed a moment of silence.

AFGE National President J. David Cox Sr. led a group of AFGE volunteers in the cleaning of the Wall, which features more than 58,000 names of service members who perished during the Vietnam War or remain missing. Cox was joined by AFGE National Secretary-Treasurer Eugene Hudson Jr., AFGE National Vice President for Women and Fair Practices Augusta Y. Thomas and

“I served in the United States Navy during the time of the Vietnam War,” said Hudson. “Times were hard during that period, but military service gave me a great sense of patriotic pride. Participating in the cleaning of this memorial was truly indescribable.”

“It was my absolute pleasure to participate in the washing of the Wall,” said Thomas. “To be able to reach out and touch the names of service members who gave the ultimate sacrifice for this nation was a humbling experience.”

AFGE continues to be on the front lines of fighting for the workplace rights of veterans employed by the federal and D.C. governments. AFGE represents hundreds of thousands of employees in the Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Defense and other vital agencies.

**UNION** ★ ★ ★ ★  
**VETERANS**  
★ ★ ★ **COUNCIL**  
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Listen to AFGE's radio show nationwide at [InsideGovernmentRadio.com](http://InsideGovernmentRadio.com) to hear:

- Rep. Hank Johnson of Georgia voice his concerns over federal employee furloughs and the long-term consequences of sequestration
- Highlights from AFGE's Midwest Regional Training in Spearfish, S.D.
- Tucker McDonald, AFGE's Field Mobilization Director, lay out the union's field mobilization plan to combat sequestration and furloughs
- AFGE Department of Veterans Affairs Council 259 President Patrick Russell discuss efforts to prevent the closure of a VA hospital in Hot Springs, S.D.
- How sequestration has affected the Selfridge Air National Guard Base in Michigan and the Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point in Southport, N.C.

- AFGE members across the federal government speaking out about the personal and professional toll of furloughs and sequestration
- AFGE National Council of SSA Field Operations Locals President Witold Skwierczynski address resolved outstanding articles from the union's contract agreement with SSA
- Art Pulaski, executive secretary-treasurer of the California Labor Federation, detail efforts to improve workplace safety in California

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## Social Media Corner: Are You Tweeting?

While many union activists may be comfortable with Facebook, less are as savvy with Twitter. In the world of social media Facebook and Twitter often share the same level of name recognition, but Facebook boasts the highest number of users. Topping more than one billion registered users, Facebook overshadows the 500 million users on Twitter. However, Twitter is just as useful in terms of social conversations and online engagement. Once you sign up and learn the lingo, you'll be ready tweet!

Twitter is very useful as a resource hub to keep track of the latest updates from the AFGE national office, lawmakers, news outlets, allied organizations and community groups. Tweet chats and hashtags are valuable tools in engaging with stakeholders and listening to important conversations on the web.

Remember, the power of social media is that it gives everyone the opportunity to share his or her own story. If you would like more information on how to use this social media platform as part of your labor communications strategy please contact the AFGE Communications Department at 202.639.6419 or send an email to [afgecommsquad@gmail.com](mailto:afgecommsquad@gmail.com).

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## **AFGE Fights Back against Mischaracterization of TSOs**

**A**AFGE recently challenged Transportation Security Administration critics on Capitol Hill for attempting to sensationalize the Government Accountability Office's recent report findings on allegations of employee misconduct. According to the GAO report, only a tiny fraction of the huge TSA workforce was involved in any misconduct, and even fewer have been involved in misconduct that had any relation to security.

The findings of the GAO study about allegations of misconduct on the part of TSA employees have been wildly mischaracterized by Rep. John Mica of Florida and other lawmakers on Capitol Hill. Airport privatization advocates are trying to use this study to undermine public confidence in TSA so that the government will re-privatize airport screening and the contractors can once again put profits before safety.

The theory that private, for-profit security is better than what TSA provides is not borne out by the facts of this report. The

data GAO analyzed show once again that the TSA workforce is doing a great job protecting the flying public, and that around 99 percent of the employees are never involved in security-related misconduct.

"TSA critics on Capitol Hill seize every opportunity to give the agency and its dedicated workforce a black eye, even when the facts do not support their arm-waving displays of false outrage," said AFGE National President J. David Cox Sr. "They want to drag us back, as a nation, to the pre-9/11 practice of using poorly trained, minimum wage rent-a-cops to protect the flying public from terrorists," Cox continued.

In an agency with a workforce the size of a small city, spread out over more than 400 airports, misconduct numbers this small indicate success, not failure. AFGE does not condone any misconduct and TSA is diligent in investigating allegations that range from being a few minutes late to work to violating security protocol. Thanks to our union, the agency is required to evaluate evidence when charges of misconduct are made, and when the facts warrant discipline, tailor the punishment to the offense.

"Efforts to sensationalize these kinds of routine management functions in order to make the case for the return of the failed, for-profit model of airport screening are appalling and irresponsible," Cox said.