

**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EEOC LOCALS No 216, AFGE, AFL-CIO**  
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**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**EEOC EMPLOYEES' UNION WILL TESTIFY BEFORE CONGRESS 3/22/12**

Gabrielle Martin, the President of the National Council of EEOC Locals, No. 216, AFGE/AFL-CIO, will testify on March 22, 2012, in Room H-309 of the U.S. Capitol, before the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Subcommittee of the House Committee on Appropriations. At this open witness hearing Martin will express support for additional funding for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), which suffered an unprecedented \$7M cut for this fiscal year 2012. The Council represents the investigators, attorneys, administrative judges, mediators, and support staff in EEOC's offices.

Martin states, "It is critical that EEOC have adequate resources to uphold the laws it enforces. Jobs are a national priority and workplace discrimination costs jobs." EEOC has seen discrimination filings rise to record highs in the past four years, including 99,947 charges in FY11. EEOC now enforces thirteen laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, and the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. The tough economy is another factor in the rising charge levels.

"EEOC's FY13 funding and oversight will represent a critical turning point. Either EEOC will U-turn back to mushrooming backlogs or move to a future where workers aren't trapped in the backlog waiting for help," says Martin. In FY07 and FY08, after six years of level funding, EEOC's backlog of cases jumped 35% each year. Compare this to FY11, where thanks to limited frontline hiring, EEOC trimmed its backlog 10%, the first reduction in ten years.

Nevertheless, EEOC is still not in a position of providing real time assistance to the public. EEOC ended FY11 with a backlog of 78,136 cases and a dismal 9 month average case processing time. Martin observes, "The rise in retaliation charges is an indication that delays at the EEOC are harming those who have sought help with the agency by filing charges. Getting assistance from EEOC will be even harder if the \$7M cut is not restored or worse cuts are authorized."

The Council is also plugging budget savings strategies to improve agency efficiency. First, the Council's two year old cost-saving full service intake plan continues to languish without action. EEOC failed to mention any intake efficiencies in its recently approved strategic plan. According to Martin, "The Council's intake plan uses trained and dedicated paraprofessional staff to fully handle the charge receipt process. Investigators will gain time to work on cases already in the system and reduce the backlog." Second, the Council calls on EEOC to keep its promise from a 2006 field restructuring to reduce supervisor to employee ratio to 1:10. Martin states, "Flattening the agency will allow for more frontline staff." Third, Martin advises that the agency, "Get with the times and use voluntary expanded telework to reduce rental costs."

Martin is optimistic that Congress will provide the needed funds and agency oversight, "Civil Rights is a bipartisan issue. Funding EEOC helps keep American workers on the job."