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PRESS RELEASE

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**EEOC UNION ENLISTS EMPLOYEES TO IDENTIFY BUDGET SAVINGS THAT
COULD REDUCE FURLOUGHS**

The Union that represents employees at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is going on the offensive to show their bosses where money can be saved to reduce the number of required furlough days. The EEOC sent notice to its employees that the budget shortfall caused by sequestration will be made up by 8.5 days of unpaid furloughs. According to Gabrielle Martin, the President of the National Council of EEOC Locals, No. 216, AFGE/AFL-CIO, "We cannot sit by and allow wasteful practices while EEOC employees are sent home without pay and the public loses their services."

Council 216 has added a BOLO (be on the look out) section to its members only Facebook page. This will allow members to report wasteful spending they observe in their offices. Martin explains, "The BOLO section will systemize the stream of e-mails the Union receives from frustrated employees letting us know about activities they see in their offices that should not be occurring in the face of furloughs. For instance, the Union learned that supervisors are traveling for meetings in EEOC's Cleveland office in May instead of using videoteleconference."

Martin reiterates that contracts remain a sore point. "Morale, already low, declines further because EEOC's permanent workforce is being sent home for 8.5 days while contractors continue to work." Employees have reported seeing EEOC solicitations on Fedbizopps for a legislative tracking service. Martin has also heard from members that contract mediators are still working, often in the same cities where the agency's own mediators face furloughs. Martin says, "These contracts should be cut or modified given the current budget landscape."

A leadership conference to be held in May in Chesapeake Bay employees saw posted on the agency website has now been quietly postponed. "Cancellation should occur to save agency resources wherever possible," stresses Martin. "As for the August EXCEL conference in Denver, flying in managers for glad handing is a totally unacceptable expenditure in the face of furlough days. I am sure if they attend I will hear about it."

Martin also wants employees to utilize the Council 216 BOLO section to share cost-savings ideas. Martin says, "We have already received an idea for the agency to require all printers to be set for double-sided printing. This would instantly cut the agency's paper and ink-toner expenses in half. Why isn't this being done? Why are we paying to recycle paper we could use for drafts?"

The Council is also plugging budget savings strategies to improve agency efficiency, including cost-saving full service intake plan, lower supervisor to employee ratios, and voluntary expanded telework to reduce rental costs. States Martin, "We are on the look out for any idea big or small to save money. The Union will not stop its campaign until the EEOC cuts back on the 8.5 furlough days by finding savings in places other than the backs of its employees."