

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission faces furloughs if sequester continues

By Josh Hicks, Updated: March 21, 2013

The agency that enforces workplace-discrimination laws will have to furlough its employees for more than eight days if the spending cuts known as the sequester continue through the rest of the fiscal year, according to the nation's largest federal employee union.

The American Federation of Government Employees, which represents workers of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, claims the furloughs would cause the current backlog of workplace discrimination cases to grow by nearly 40 percent.

“Before one employee gets furloughed, EEOC needs to scrub its budget for savings, create efficiencies and give up its sacred cows,” said Gabrielle Martin, president of the National Council of EEOC Locals.

Martin plans to bring her concerns before the [House Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies](#) on Thursday, arguing that Congress should restore the commission's budget to \$367 million, where it stood in 2011.

The agency must trim its spending by 5 percent under [the sequester](#).

Martin plans to argue on Thursday that the commission could achieve its cost-savings by reducing contracts, lowering the supervisor-to-employee ratio, trimming management travel and utilizing telework options, according to a statement from the union.

Martin said the commission should be “following [Government Services Administration's] lead by canceling conferences.” She noted that the agency is still promoting its leadership conference in May.

The GSA this week [canceled](#) the last of its national conferences scheduled for this year.

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