



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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Tell Your Friends and Neighbors... I Am AFGE!

Where would this country be without federal employees to protect our borders, clean up hazardous waste, research cures for deadly diseases, process Social Security checks, care for veterans and deliver all the other valuable programs and services that benefit millions of Americans every day?

And where would we be without labor unions to fight for worker rights and protections, such as the standard 40-hour work week, job safety and health, time off to address medical and family needs, and a discrimination-free workplace?

Too many citizens don't appreciate the work you do on their behalf, and too many take for granted the worker rights and protections that labor activists fought to put in place. That leaves the door open for folks in Washington who want to dismantle the federal government and put unions out of business. That's why we've created a new campaign to increase the public's awareness

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

You don't need me to tell you that the past few years have been some of the worst federal employees have seen in decades: pay was frozen, retirement benefits were cut, the government shut its doors, and furloughs and downgrades were forced on countless unwilling public servants.

A small group of anti-government congressmen manufacture a political crisis and hold the workforce hostage until their demands are met. Invariably some compromise is reached that freezes your pay, cuts your benefits, or puts you out of work.

But let's be clear – this is driven by some members of Congress that Americans voted for, and it is these members we need to vote out in November.

More so than any other group, federal employees have paid the price for the failure of our politicians. Though AFGE members have stepped up to the plate and prevented some of the most egregious attacks, this defensive posture is simply unsustainable.

As we enter this election year, we need to take full advantage of this opportunity for change and elect those who value federal employees. We need to lock out the people who shut down our government, and open a new Congress that preserves vital services for the public. We need to cut the hard-liners looking to eliminate your pension and grow a secure retirement for every federal employee. But we can't do this alone.

Your vote will be critical to taking our government in a new direction – but it is only a start. Our votes alone will not deliver the magnitude of change we need to end the vicious cycle in which we find ourselves. If we are to overcome the forces arrayed against us, we need to spread the word and get our friends and families involved.

I'm willing to bet that you know at least 15 people – friends, family, and acquaintances – who are registered to vote. If every one of the 2.1 million federal and D.C. government employees turned out just 10 of them to vote, they would make up 24% of the total electorate. If they turned out all 15, they would make up a whopping 36%.

In an environment where elections are often won by less than a 10% margin, this could do more than elect

just a few pro-government members of Congress; it would fundamentally change the political dynamic in Washington and bring the antigovernment attacks to a screeching halt.

To make this happen AFGE members will need to lead the charge. We need to support pro-employee lawmakers and punish those who oppose our values. We need to register new voters and educate them on the issues that impact their wallets. And yes, we need to bring our friends, families, and communities to the polls this November.

If we succeed, we can usher in a new era of prosperity for government employees. If we sit on the sidelines, we will get the government we deserve. What will you decide?

In Solidarity,

AFGE—THE GOVERNMENT STANDARD

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J. David Cox Sr. National President
Eugene Hudson Jr. National Secretary-Treasurer
Augusta Y. Thomas National Vice President for Women and Fair Practices Departments

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National Vice Presidents:

- District 2 — *Derrick F. Thomas*, 732.828.9449; NY, NJ, CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT.
- District 3 — *Keith Hill*, 570.883.9572; DE, PA.
- District 4 — *Joseph Flynn*, 410.480.1820; MD, NC, VA, WV.
- District 5 — *Everett Kelley*, 770.907.2055; AL, FL, GA, SC, TN, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico.
- District 6 — *Arnold Scott*, 317.755.2093; IN, KY, OH.
- District 7 — *Dorothy James*, 312.421.6245; IL, MI, WI.
- District 8 — *Jane Nygaard*, 952.854.3216; IA, MN, NE, ND, SD.
- District 9 — *Michael Kelly*, 405.670.2656; AR, KS, MO, OK.
- District 10 — *Roy Flores*, 210.735.8900; LA, MS, TX, NM, Panama.
- District 11 — *Gerald D. Swanke*, 360.253.2616; AK, CO, ID, MT, OR, UT, WA, WY, Guam, Okinawa.
- District 12 — *George McCubbin*, 760.233.7600; AZ, CA, HI, NV.
- District 14 — *Eric Bunn Sr.*, 202.639.6447; District of Columbia, Montgomery and Prince George's Counties in Maryland; Arlington and Fairfax Counties and the City of Alexandria in Virginia.

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(from cover)

and appreciation of the hard work and valuable services federal employees and proud union members deliver each and every day.

It's a campaign you can share with your friends and neighbors by repeating three simple words: I Am AFGE. The centerpiece of the year-long campaign is a set of 15 short-form documentaries that highlight many of our members – not only the work they do, but who they are as individuals and what it means to them to be federal employees. We interviewed more than two dozen members for the campaign during our annual Legislative and Grassroots Mobilization Conference in February.

The first video introduced the nation to Local 1260 member **Victor Payes**, a Transportation Security Officer at Los Angeles International Airport who witnessed firsthand the aftermath of the fatal Nov. 1 shooting that claimed the life of his coworker, Gerardo Hernandez, and injured two other TSA officers and a teacher.

Subsequent videos are being released every three weeks through the end of the year, giving our members a chance to share their stories and literally put a face on the federal government.

“The goal of this campaign is to break down the stereotypes that some folks have about federal employees and the federal government, and to highlight all the great work that federal employees are doing,” AFGE National President J. David Cox Sr. said. *“The best way to do this is through our members’ own voices.”*

Indeed, everyone can participate in the I Am AFGE campaign – and we hope that you do! By spreading positive stories about federal employees and the unions that protect everyone’s rights, we can change the conversation in Washington and move from the hit list to the honor roll.



How you can be part of I Am AFGE:

- Submit a “selfie” photo using your smartphone to afgecommsquad@gmail.com (or just use hashtag #IAMAFGE) and we’ll share on social media. Please be aware of agency policies regarding taking photos on government property.
- Tell us why you chose public service at **844-IAM-AFGE** and we will share your story online.
- View the documentaries online at www.afge.org/IAM and share the videos and other content on social media using the hashtag #IAMAFGE

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District 14 Taking Action to Shape Washington, D.C.'s Political Future

The results of the recent D.C. primary elections was a surprise to many. Labor lost two of its labor-friendly candidates, the current Mayor **Vincent Gray** and Ward 1 Councilman **Jim Graham**, both of whom have been champions for working American families.

“We are very disappointed with the losses of not only those with whom we have worked for several years but also of those with whom we looked forward to working in the future,” said AFGE’s 14th District National Vice President **Eric Bunn Sr.**

AFGE District 14 originally endorsed Mayor Gray because of his stance on making all D.C. employees essential

during the federal government shutdown, paying back D.C. employees from the 2011 four day furlough, and approving a 12% pay increase to D.C. workers over the next 4 years, just to name a few.

Looking forward to the general elections, “AFGE, along with the Metropolitan Central Labor Council, will review each candidate carefully to decide on who will best serve and respect labor and working American families, regardless of party affiliation,” said Bunn. “We certainly do not want a repeat of the torment that we suffered under the previous Fenty Administration.”

The general election is scheduled for November 4, 2014.

10 Things You Need to Know About Paul Ryan's 2015 Budget

The House passed Budget Committee Chairman **Paul Ryan's** 2015 budget proposal by a wide margin this April. After years of withering attacks on federal pay, benefits, and jobs that culminated in the 2013 government shutdown, you would think the Paul Ryan wing of Congress would lighten up on federal employees. But with this year's budget, it seems that he is doubling down on the failed proposals of the past and tightening the squeeze on federal employees.



After \$138 billion in sacrifices over the past four years, Paul Ryan is calling for billions and billions more: increases in your retirement contributions, cuts to

Think \$138 billion is bad?

Here's what Paul Ryan has in mind for your wallet:

- 1 5.5% Pay Cut
- 2 1 employee will be replaced for every 3 that leave
- 3 Student loan reimbursements eliminated
- 4 Slash FERS annuity supplement
- 5 Cuts agencies even worse than sequestration
- 6 Increase privatization at TSA
- 7 \$125 billion cut from scholarship programs
- 8 Kills 4 million jobs through 2016
- 9 Slashes taxes for corporations and the wealthy by 33%
- 10 Makes you pay the price for Wall St. greed

Keeping Tabs on the Federal Workforce's Contribution to Deficit Reduction:

The federal workforce has contributed **\$138 billion** toward deficit reduction over 10 years:

3-year pay freeze (2011, 2012, 2013)	\$98 billion
2012 UI extension which increased retirement contributions for 2013 hires to 3.1%	\$15 billion
2013 lost salaries of 750,000 employees furloughed because of sequestration	\$1 billion
2013 Murray-Ryan Agreement increased retirement contributions for post-2013 hires to 4.4%	\$6 billion
2014 pay raise of only 1%; lower than baseline of 1.8%	\$18 billion

..... **\$138 billion**

This number is important as no other group of Americans has contributed more!

your take-home pay, fewer coworkers to accomplish your agency's mission, fewer opportunities to repay your student loans, and more. This monster of a budget reads like nothing short of a greatest hits album of anti-government, anti-federal employee attacks, and it needs to be stopped.

"Mr. Ryan's budget is both morally repulsive and intellectually dishonest," said AFGE President **J. David Cox, Sr.** "Putting into place his plan to impoverish the federal workforce hurts not only federal workers and their families, but all Americans who rely on the government for services ranging from care of veterans to repair of military equipment to enforcement of clean air and water law to security at the border. Shame on Representative Ryan."

It is clear that the austerity policies of the past four years have failed. We need a budget that invests in shared prosperity for all, not austerity.

Dismantling Social Security

The Social Security Administration's Plan to Kill Customer Service



VS.



The Social Security Administration (SSA) budget has been repeatedly slashed in recent years. Rather than fight for the funding needed to serve the public, SSA took a hatchet to its workforce and services.

Since 2010, SSA closed 70 field offices and 500 part-time contact stations, cut office hours by 28%, and shed 11,000 employees. The impact of these cuts has effectively eliminated face-to-face service to millions of people.

Now, SSA workers are forced to pressure the public to file claims and get other services online. SSA employees report that internet claims contain numerous omissions, errors and bad decisions, which have resulted in substantial and permanent benefit loss to claimants. This explains why 43 million people streamed into SSA offices last year rather than choose the unreliable online alternative.

But the last three years' cuts are just the beginning; SSA is now eliminating various other vital services. Eleven million people visited SSA offices last year to obtain Social Security numbers (SSNs) and benefit verifications. SSA plans to eliminate these services effective October 1, and argues

that these services can be obtained online or by phone.

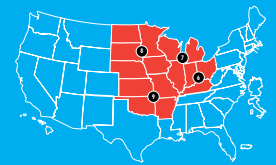
Obtaining benefit verifications online requires a cumbersome enrollment in the MY SSA customer portal. This approach completely ignores the fact that 40 percent of senior citizens don't even own computers, and those that do tend to use the internet infrequently.

SSA's alternative to online SSN verification is the chronically understaffed and notoriously slow 1-800 number. On top of the long wait times, verification services include a seven-to-ten-day mail delay. Someone looking to get a job, loan, or benefits cannot afford to wait that long.

"Dismantling face-to-face service will cause grave harm to the income security for millions of SSA customers," said Council 220 President Witold Skwierczynski. "Unless we act now, SSA field offices and face-to-face service will disappear and SSA will be transformed to an automated, unresponsive agency. The public still wants personal service and we will fight to maintain it."

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Midwest Regional Training comes to Kansas City



Learn and network with other AFGE leaders and activists

Registration is now open for the 2014 Midwest Regional Training scheduled for July 21-25 at the Argosy Casino Hotel and Spa in Kansas City, Missouri. The Kansas City location is one of several Argosy properties where the Seafarers Entertainment and Allied Trade Union represents approximately 1,900 employees. AFGE leaders and activists can select from a wide range of training programs and conference events, including:

- Financial Officers
- Collective Bargaining
- Representation (formerly called Stewards)

- EEO Basic
- Health & Safety/Workers' Compensation
- New Leaders
- Litigation (formerly called Arbitration)
- Advanced Litigation
- Advanced Collective Bargaining
- PAC/Political Action

Register before June 27 for \$200 and save \$75 off the full registration fee.

Register and learn more about the conference at:
www.afge.org/midwestregion.

AFGE Secures Big Gains in Historic TSA Arbitration

After months of testimony and negotiations with the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), AFGE achieved important gains in a historic interest arbitration recently, settling disputes over worker protections and elements of the TSA's collective bargaining contract and providing more protections for Transportation Security Officers (TSOs).

The arbitration followed years of issues that TSOs had endured, including high airport parking rates with little compensation.

Among the victories AFGE secured for TSOs are:

- TSA Must Provide Specific Information During Shift Bidding
- TSA Must Establish Work Group on TSOs Bidding to Change Certifications (baggage to pax or vice versa)
- Parking Subsidies Increased at Airports Participating in the Parking Subsidy Program
- AFGE May Request the Addition of More Airports to the Parking Subsidy Program

- TSA Must Adjust Employees' Schedules for Representation Purposes
- AFGE Must Be an Equal Partner in Selecting Employees for TSA Committees
- New Bargaining Is Possible When TSA Makes a Change that Affects an Issue Covered by the CBA

In addition to these hard-fought victories, the panel agreed that the existence of a dispute resolution system was sufficient to address the union's concern for a fair shift and annual leave bid process – so that if management doesn't conduct a proper bid, a grievance can be filed.

Together with AFGE, TSA employees have made enormous strides in workers' rights. Before joining forces, TSA employees were barred from unionizing, from negotiating an enforceable contract, or bargaining collectively for more benefits and better wages. After joining forces in 2011, AFGE has provided TSOs a true voice in their workplace and a strong union standing with them to fight for their needs.



Metro Season Has Arrived

It's that time of year again! The AFGE organizing team is on the Metropolitan Initiative (Metro) trail with teams of AFGE national organizers, activists and volunteers swarming dozens of metropolitan areas with the strong message of recruiting new employees into the ranks of our great union.

In spite of the endless attacks on federal employees pay and benefits, AFGE continues to be the best job insurance that money can buy. AFGE leaders, activists and members are working tirelessly to convince Congress that federal employees should no longer experience another year without a pay increase; should not experience another day of furloughs; nor another unfair increase in retirement contributions and health insurance premiums.

AFGE members are tirelessly educating their non-member co-workers on how their membership will strengthen our union's efforts in improving working conditions, pay, and benefits for federal employees.

Joining AFGE and supporting the union's efforts with your membership is the easiest way to tell Congress and agency management that federal employees will stand up for themselves with a collective voice; that our voice will be heard on the hill and when bargaining with agencies for the fair treatment we deserve.

AFGE members understand the importance of increasing the union's membership; there is strength in numbers. Every member strengthens the union's advocacy for federal employees. So now more than ever, we must not only organize during Metro season, but organize, organize, organize every day!



Photo by Shawn Moran

J. David Cox, AFGE National President, Maricela Solis de Kester, District Director for Rep. Ron Barber (2nd District AZ) and Keith Bocharski, Executive VP for Local 2544.



Photo by Shawn Moran

Cox and Solis de Kester met with Tucson Border Patrol Sector canine handlers.

J. David Cox Travels to Border Patrol Outposts In Support of Border Patrol Pay Reform Act

In April, AFGE National President **J. David Cox Sr.** traveled to the US/Mexico border to advocate for a better pay system for border patrol agents – and to ensure that their pay isn’t at the mercy of budget politics.

Cox visited the Border Patrol McAllen Station in McAllen, TX (Local 3307), El Paso Ysleta, Port of Entry (Local 1929) and the Brian A. Terry Border Patrol Station in Bisbee, AZ (Local 2544) to discuss the Border Patrol Pay Reform Act (H.R. 3463). The Act is sponsored by Representative **Jason Chaffetz** (UT) and Senator **Jon Tester** (MT), and is cosponsored by Representative **Filemon Vela** (TX) and Representative **Ron Barber** (AZ).

The new bill would give border patrol agents stability and predictability in their pay and hours, and prevent chaos at the border from border patrol agents not knowing what their hours or schedule will be.

Joining President Cox on his tour were staff members from Representatives Barber and Vela’s offices, as well as 10th District NVP **Roy Flores**, and National Border Patrol Council Vice Presidents **Shawn Moran** and **Joe Perkins**.

At each stop on his trip, Cox spoke to AFGE members and members of the local press about the importance of the legislation. In addition, Cox says he has an even deeper appreciation for the range and difficulty of the tasks that border patrol agents are expected to perform, and the bravery they have on the job. He said patrolling the border is a complex and challenging job, and the men and women put in charge of securing our borders are “extraordinary.”

“Border patrol agents are our first line of defense in keeping our country secure,” Cox said. “We need to reform this pay system so that officers finally have the system that they deserve.”

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Defend



Our Jobs

AFGE and DEFCON Push Back in Bid to Defend Our Jobs

DEFCON and AFGE have gone on the offensive to counter a rash of proposals targeting civilian employees at the Department of Defense. These proposals would threaten civilian jobs, undermine the department's ability to carry out its mission and end up costing taxpayers more money. Here are the issues currently facing civilian employees:

- A proposal would slash the size of the DoD civilian workforce by 15 percent, or nearly 120,000 employees, which would force DoD to rely on more costly contractors and military personnel
- The Army wants to pull out of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service and create its own financial management office, which would cost more than 2,400 civilian jobs
- The Air Force wants to wipe out the A-10 Thunderbolt II, commonly known as the Warthog, which could threaten hundreds of civilian jobs and jeopardize air support for ground forces
- A proposal would slash the Defense Commissary Agency's budget by 70 percent, which would force commissaries to raise prices significantly and make it more costly for military members and the families to shop there

- A cap on the size of the federal civilian workforce forces DoD to hire contractors to handle new work, costing taxpayers two to three times as much
- The Army is converting civilian jobs to the military in violation of its own guidance and guidance from the Pentagon, which also costs taxpayers more money
- Some lawmakers want to repeal the ban on conducting public-private job competitions under OMB Circular A-76, even though A-76 is a flawed process that is biased against civilian employees

To fight back against these attacks, AFGE and DEFCON has launched the Defend Our Jobs campaign. The campaign provides employees with all of the information and tools they need to effectively lobby Congress in opposition to these proposals. To do your part or learn more about the campaign, join us at www.afge.org/defendourjobs.

Please note: this site should not be viewed on government time or using government equipment, since it asks members to take steps in favor of or in opposition to currently legislative proposals. Instead, members should wait until they're off duty to view the site – and only use their personal computer or smart phone.

**2014 AFGE
DEFCON
TRAINING**



September 8 - 12, 2014 • New Orleans, Louisiana • www.afge.org

THANK YOU!

AFGE Celebrates National Nurses Week!

A FGE joined millions of nurses around the world in celebrating National Nurses Week May 6-12. As a representative of more than 100,000 government employees who are proud members of the nursing profession, AFGE is committed to fighting for their workplace rights. Through collective bargaining, legislative advocacy, legal representation, organizing and education, AFGE ensures that government sector nurses and the patients they care for are protected.

“As a former nurse, this week holds a special place in my heart,” said AFGE National President **J. David Cox Sr.** *“The commitment nurses have to their patients and the profession is inspiring. Most of us have relied on a nurse to care for us at one point in our lives and we should use this time to celebrate their service.”*

To address the concerns of nurses in the public sector, AFGE utilizes its Nurses Steering Committee and National VA Council to work with lawmakers in drafting bills concerning patient safety, work hours, safe staffing, patient safety, professional education and other critical issues.

The committee also prides itself in promoting justice and equality at worksites to ensure nurse satisfaction, retention and delivery of quality care to patients.

“Our committee plays an important role in how we represent nurses as a union,” said AFGE District 8 National Vice President and committee chair **Jane Nygaard.** *“Our nurses are on the front lines of patient care and are in a unique position to use the union to implement critical changes in the workplace.”*

AFGE has worked with Veteran Service Organizations on a wide range of issues impacting federal nurses, including adequate and predictable funding, to ensure agencies such as the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) can serve veterans without interruption and uncertainty. This became critical during the shutdown as VA nurses were able to stay on the job during the lockout and keep serving our nation’s heroes.

“Nurses provide care in so many areas of medicine,” said AFGE National VA Council President **Alma Lee.** *“We must ensure that we are supporting their work needs as they focus on caring for our loved ones. To provide that level of support is an honor for us as an organization.”*

The demands on nurses continue to increase in the government sector as agencies face restricted budgets and understaffing. AFGE will continue to amplify the voice of its members in its fight for safe staffing, full bargaining rights, fair overtime pay rules and safe workplaces.

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Cheryl Daniel



AFGE Nurses Steering Committee members gathered in Las Vegas this year to discuss national strategies.



Patrick Kearns



President Cox greets Officers Tony Grigsby (left) and James Speer (right) who were wounded when a gunman attacked LAX last year.

TSA Employees' Union Renews Call for Armed Protection at Airport Screening Areas

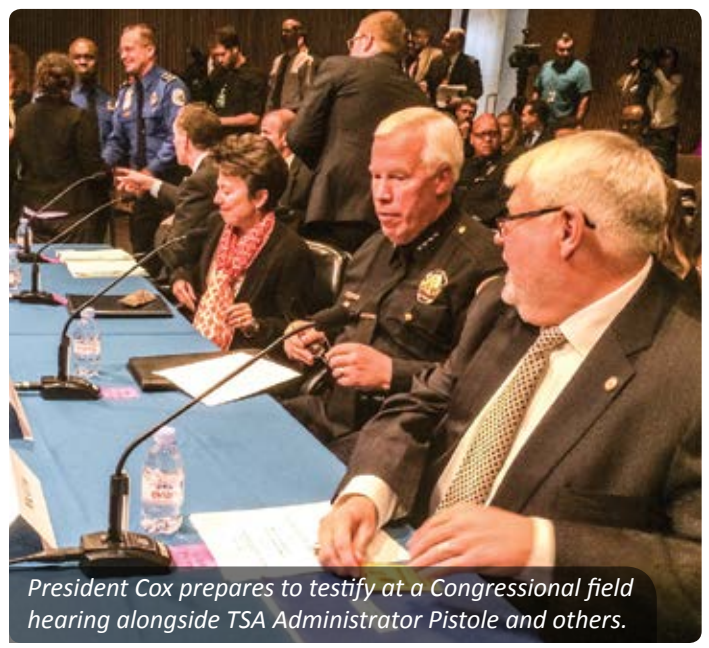
National President **J. David Cox, Sr.** testified before the House Committee on Homeland Security's Subcommittee on Transportation Security field hearing at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) in March about airport screening area security. The hearing came in the wake of last year's tragic shooting that took the life of one officer and wounded two others. Cox renewed AFGE's call for the creation of a new armed law enforcement unit within TSA to ensure immediate and consistent protection of screening areas at airports nationwide.

A report issued by TSA in March called for increased presence of armed law enforcement officers in security screening areas. Another March report issued by Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) found a litany of holes in screening area security, making them unsafe for both workers and passengers. Both the TSA and LAWA reports confirmed what AFGE has declared since the LAX incident last November-- the security processes and systems at checkpoints nationwide are fundamentally broken. "As we have learned since November 1st, current airport law enforcement operations have gaps and inconsistencies that leave TSOs and passengers vulnerable. Many airports have no armed law enforcement officers stationed at or in the airport," testified Cox.

AFGE strongly believes TSA should create an armed Transportation Security Law Enforcement Officer (TS-LEO) position that is assigned to protect TSOs and passengers at airport checkpoints and other key locations within airports.

AFGE recommended further security improvements, including the installation of raised platforms to increase officer visibility and provide a deterrent to potential wrongdoers. Other key recommendations to improve airport security included expansion and improvement of the Behavior Detection Officer program, active shooter training for TSOs, and upgraded coordination between airport and local first responders.

"The bottom line is that no TSO should have to fear for their life when they show up to work in the morning," Cox added. "They do their job and protect the flying public every day. Now we need to hold up our end of the bargain and protect them."



President Cox prepares to testify at a Congressional field hearing alongside TSA Administrator Pistole and others.



Announcing the 2014 Full Scholarship from Grantham University

Need some help paying for your education? AFGE members are able to apply online for the 2014 Grantham University Scholarship from now through August 31st.

The scholarship, valued at \$36,000, will cover tuition costs, required textbooks, software, and fees for the recipient to earn an undergraduate or graduate degree at Grantham University, completely online. Each scholarship will also include a laptop computer provided by Purchasing Power and AFGE.

The University offers a variety of Associates, Bachelors and Masters Degrees in areas such as Business Administration, Business Management, Computer Science, Criminal Justice, Engineering Technology, Health Sciences, Information Systems Security, and Medical Coding and Billing.

Interested applicants must be an AFGE member, meet the University's minimum admissions requirements, and submit an essay with a minimum of 500 words, and not to exceed 1,000 words. The essay will be titled "What my union means to me." Please describe your relationship with the union and the labor movement, how it has

personally affected your life, and explain why you believe you are a good choice for a union scholarship. Scholarship applications will be accepted until midnight Eastern Time on August 31st. The winner will be announced by October 3rd, via AFGE's and Grantham's website.

In addition to the scholarship program, AFGE members and their families can take advantage of a special tuition rate of \$250 per credit hour at Grantham, which includes a Textbook and Software Grant that covers the cost of required textbooks and software.

To view a list of available degree programs, apply for the scholarship, or get more information, visit the Member Benefits section on the AFGE web site: www.afge.org. Look for Grantham University under the "Education" section.

AFGE's educational partner since 2006, Grantham University has been meeting the educational needs of working adult students for over 60 years. Its 100% online degree programs are flexible and portable, allowing you to fit education into your life instead of arranging your life around your education.

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Register now for AFGE's Diversity Week Events!

Online registration is now open for the YOUNG Summit, LGBT Pride Summit and Human Rights Training Conference.

This year's events will be held in Minneapolis, MN., August 23-29. Follow the trainings online using the hashtags: **#AFGEYOUNGSummit**, **#AFGEPrideSummit** and **#AFGEHRT2014**

YOUNG registration:
www.afge.org/YOUNGSummit

LGBT Pride registration:
www.afge.org/pride

Human Rights Training conference:
www.afge.org/HRT



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