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Kelley Criticizes Romney's View of Unfairness as Out of Touch

Washington, D.C.—The leader of the nation's largest independent union of federal employees today took issue with presumptive Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney's comments made after his primary victories last night indicating that cutting pay and benefits for middle-class federal workers would be at the top of his agenda to address "unfairness."

"Does he have any idea of the real unfairness facing our country?" said National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU) President Colleen M. Kelley.

"I have a different definition of unfairness, like the tax policies of Gov. Romney's party that require secretaries to pay higher tax rates than billionaires; like discrimination against women in the workplace that his party opposed fixing; like cuts to safety net programs to fund tax breaks for corporations that move jobs overseas; and like executives at government contractors being paid \$760,000 each with taxpayer dollars," said President Kelley.

"Every day, federal workers—from law enforcement officers to food inspectors to doctors to scientists in virtually every discipline, and many others—perform a variety of tasks vital to ordinary people throughout our country," she said. "Every federal employee knows well there is a direct connection between the efforts he or she makes, day in and day out, and the quality of life for the public they serve."

At the same time, federal employees are feeling the effects of the recession, as well as budget cuts that have unfairly singled them out, she said. President Kelley emphasized that not only are they in the second year of a two-year pay freeze—amounting to a \$60 billion contribution to deficit reduction over 10 years, with another \$15 billion contribution to be made in reduced pensions—"they face the same economic pressures and anxieties as do other Americans."

The NTEU leader added: "Federal workers are not apart from the rest of our country; they are, in fact, middle class working people, who live and work in cities and towns all across our country. The real unfairness is contained in these continuing political attacks, and not just on their pay and benefits, but on their commitment to duty and country."

NTEU represents about 150,000 employees in 31 agencies and departments.