

**For Immediate Release**  
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**NTEU Demands ‘Business Case’ Be Made  
For Proposed Trademark Office Layoffs**

**Washington, D.C.** — A proposal to layoff a third of the trademark examining attorneys at the Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) deserves a thorough review, said National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU) President Colleen M. Kelley, during a meeting with affected employees.

“NTEU will be looking for PTO to make a convincing business case for its proposed reduction in force of up to 135 trademark examining attorneys. At this point, there are more questions than answers,” said Kelley.

The union leader told some 250 Trademark employees at a lunch-time meeting today that there is nothing to demonstrate how these proposed layoffs will impact customer service. She said that while the agency is pointing to a shortfall in demand for services when the economy stalled last year, there is every indication, including the administration’s own projections, that the economy will rebound.

“There has to be some forethought given to customer needs in the coming months and years,” said Kelley. “We need to look at the number of trademark applications that are now pending, and the impact a reduction in force will have on the turnaround time, quality and the implementation of the agency’s new e-commerce initiative. Again, there are many questions that need to be answered.”

Kelley said NTEU will request to negotiate issues surrounding the proposed reduction in force, and will

make formal requests for detailed information to help in analyzing the impact of the agency's proposal. In addition, she said, NTEU will call on Congress to ensure that PTO makes a sound business case for its proposals.

“PTO is under no budgetary pressure to reduce staff,” said Kelley. “There are adequate funds in this year's budget and the administration's budget proposal for the next fiscal year does not even have the PTO spending all of the fees it collects. We will ask Congress to look at the facts. We want to stress that a temporary decline in the number of trademark applications provides an opportunity for PTO to address many other serious concerns. Instead of looking to eliminate experienced and dedicated employees, PTO should be putting these employees to good use in clearing out the backlog of pending trademark applications, improving the quality of services provided, and advancing e-commerce efforts at the agency.”

NTEU is the nation's largest independent federal sector union, representing some 150,000 employees in 26 federal agencies and departments, including PTO.

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