

## Baltimore EEOC Employees Thank Maryland Senator Barbara A. Mikulski

**O**n August 29, 2006, a group of EEOC employees from the Baltimore "Field" Office were thrilled to have the great opportunity to visit and to personally thank Senator Barbara A. Mikulski for her outstanding work on the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee to increase EEOC's 2007 budget by \$4 million, block further funding to the National Call Center, and restore EEOC's Baltimore office to a district office.

Local 3614 President Regina Andrew presented Senator Mikulski with a gift of artwork by a Maryland artist and signed by Local 3614's Baltimore members. The Senator was so pleased with the Local's token of appreciation that she immediately hung it on her office wall.

Following that presentation, Baltimore EEOC employees had an opportunity to sit down and meet with Mikulski, where they shared their concerns about Baltimore's shrinking staff, increasing workloads, and problems with National Call Center. Senator Mikulski referred to the Call Center as the "wrong number" for victims

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*Senator Mikulski and Baltimore EEOC employees (from left) Regina M. Andrew (Local 3614 President and EEOC Trial Attorney); Nicole Chandler (EEOC Investigator), David Norken (Local 3614 Secretary/Treasurer and EEOC AJ), Mattie Whitfield (EEOC Investigator), Monique Murray (EEOC Investigator), and Charles Shubow (EEOC AJ).*

## 37<sup>th</sup> AFGE Convention Held In Atlanta New Officers Elected; National Council Recognized



On August 6, 2006 the 37<sup>th</sup> American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Convention was called to order by AFGE President John Gage in Atlanta, Georgia under the theme of "Its Our Turn: Poised for the Future". The consistent message throughout the convention as signaled by Gage's keynote address to the convention was the need to take back the government from forces hostile to labor, organize and recruit and continue to fight on issues that affect government

employees. Gage noted that AFGE has, over the past three years, increased its membership by more than 12,000 member-something no other union has been able to do. Gage then proceeded to tick off the accomplishments of the AFGE in the areas of Workplace Representation, Litigation and Legislative and Political Action. He mentioned and commended various union leaders, Locals and Councils which had waged significant battles and achieved

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*AFGE President John Gage (center) is flanked by Mike Davidison, National Council 1st Vice President and 216 Works editor who accepted awards for newsletter and website excellence, and Rachel Shonfield, the Legislative Coordinator for the Council who accepted the Council's award for Legislative and Political Action.*

# The Importance of Membership



Gabrielle Martin,  
Council President

Having recently returned from the Council 216 meeting and AFGE convention, I am buoyed by the accomplishments that this union -your union- made during the past

year. At the March 2006 AFGE Legislative conference, this Council was highlighted as the "Little Council That Could" for our legislative efforts. At that time, it was early in the budget process. Since then, with your help, this Council has traveled far. We have had even greater impact on our agency budget. We lobbied hard for additional funding and staff and gained

four million dollars for our budget from Senate appropriators and strong language from House appropriators. Staffing is a grave concern for the appropriators from both the House and Senate and the language attempts to focus EEOC's funding in that direction.

In June, this Council was a huge part of a Press Conference at the National Press Club! We were able to work with the AFGE National Office and marshal out constituents to stand tall with us in seeking funding for EEOC. We shed light on the wasted funds channeled into the contractor operated call center and highlight the Inspector General's evaluation that gave dismal grading to the call center operations. In July, the Commission

All of us have a duty to the Union to make sure we remain a powerful force. This union exists because others before us built its legacy. We are trustees of that legacy. It is up to each union member to build upon it. We have done that in a number of ways. But we must continue to forge ahead. It is our job to build the membership of this union to protect what we have gained and achieve more. When we build a strong and cohesive bargaining unit, management takes notice. When management thinks it can divide us because few eligible people join the union, we end up as beggars. Instead of forging ahead, we seek the ability merely to exist. Like pack animals and scavengers, management will seek out the weakest links in an effort to destroy the union. So what should each of us be doing? Those reading this who are not union members should consider all the union has done and is doing, big and small, that would otherwise make your working environment considerably more unpleasant. The union is your insurance policy - there when you need it. Each union member should make talk to our co-workers and urge them to join this union. If we fail to do so, we are giving up the legacy. We need to urge and convince our non-member co-workers to join the union, stop existing off the dues money others pay, off the blood, sweat, tears and recrimination suffered by those before us and those of us currently in the union. We need to urge these non-member co-workers to join this union and to stand up for all of the things they take for granted, including, but not limited to the availability of telework and flexible hours, someone to fight battles for promotions and against unjust discipline, someone to protect the agency budget, filing grievances on overtime and the lack of compensatory time, someone to fight for adequate staffing and training, someone to do the lobbying and someone to protect the gains and the things we need.

This Council will be conducting a membership drive. Won't you do your part to help build your union? For as AFGE reminds us - United We Stand, Divided We Beg!

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**All of us have a duty to the Union to make sure we remain a powerful force. This union exists because others before us built its legacy.**

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was originally to vote on making the call center permanent. However, union action forced the Commission to instead vote on extending the call center as a pilot for an additional year. Our efforts prevented a vote to make the call center permanent. We also focused Congress on the need for additional staffing.

At AFGE's August 2006 convention, this Council won national recognition for several of our efforts - our newsletter, *216 Works*, the Council website, [www.council216.org](http://www.council216.org), and for our legislative activities. Our Council's efforts also are featured in the convention handbooks. In addition, during the opening remarks to the convention, AFGE National President John Gage highlighted the work of our Council. But none of these awards ensures our existence. While strong and committed leadership is important, you, our members ensure our existence and ensure that we are strong.

**National Council of EEOC  
Locals No. 216 Officers**

**Gabrielle Martin,**  
*President*

**Michael Davidson,**  
*1st Vice-President*

**Rachel H. Shonfield,**  
*2nd Vice-President*

**Levi Morrow,**  
*Treasurer*

**Danny Lawson,**  
*Secretary*

**Kathleen Harman,**  
*Executive Assistant  
to the President*

**Local Presidents**

**Regina Andrew**  
*Local 3614*

**Sharon Baker**  
*Local 3599*

**Ricardo Ceuvas**  
*Local 3555*

**Michael E. Davidson**  
*Local 3504*

**Johnnie Louis Johnson, III**  
*Local 2667*

**Gabrielle Martin**  
*Local 3230*

**Levi Morrow**  
*Local 3637*

**Joseph Wilson**  
*Local 3629*

## The Little Council That Could Stays on Track



Rachel Shonfield,  
Legislative Coordinator

At the AFGE Legislative Conference in March, 2006, AFGE Lobbyist John Threlt-geld referred to the National Council of EEOC Locals, No. 216 (the Council) as “the little Council that could”. That phrase

was coined in recognition of the Council’s successes in its legislative program. The Council is probably the smallest council in the AFGE. That has not stopped it from developing a legislative program that has given fits to EEOC Chair Cari Dominguez and has achieved successes disproportionate to its size. The Council’s success include sign-on letter in both the Senate and the House; and, currently, Senate Appropriations Committee language that defunds the poorly performing EEOC Call Center, adds \$4million to EEOC’s 2007 budget and reestablishes the Baltimore office to District status.

The Council continued to achieve recognition at the AFGE convention. It was presented with awards for its legislative and political program, its website and its newsletter. The Council was mentioned prominently by National President John Gage in his key note address to the convention and by National Vice President Andrea Brooks, both in her campaign speeches for reelection and in addresses to the convention. Moreover, the campaign addressing the EEOC crisis was featured on the front page of the AFGE July/August newsletter, *The Government Standard*, along with a photo of Council president, Gabrielle Martin.

## Labor’s Day Marks Legacy

The intent and purpose of Labor Day has been obscured by location in time – the first Monday in September. To many, Labor Day marks the end of summer. Originally, this day was, literally, Labor’s day. It is about a century and a quarter old with the first celebrations occurring around 1882. In the next several years states and municipalities passed ordinances recognizing Labor Day. In 1887 several states passed Labor Day laws. However, it did not become a nationally recognized legal holiday until 1894. The holiday was created within the Labor Movement and the intent was to dedicate the day to the social and economic achievements of American workers and the contributions they have made to build and strengthen the United States. It also is meant to draw the public’s attention to the struggles of the Labor Movement to improve working conditions for working people. The current political climate makes this holiday all the more topical.

Labor Day, this year, falls on September 4, 2006. Gabrielle Martin, National Council of EEOC Locals, No. 216 stated, “We are the trustees of labor’s legacy. What happens now will impact workers for years to come. Let’s use the legacy wisely and build on it so that the workplaces of our children and grandchildren will be improved and we do not loose ground.”

## AFGE, Council Raise Dues

Both the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) and the National Council of EEOC Locals, No. 216 (the Council) have found it necessary to raise per capita assessments. Both bodies have approved dues raises OF \$1.00 per pay period. Increases will become effective on January 1, 2007. The increases were voted on in early August, 2006 at the Atlanta, Georgia meetings of the Council and the AFGE, respectively.

The Council is comprised of eight Locals throughout the country. Dues charged by the Locals is split three ways: the largest portion goes to AFGE; next sizable bite to the Council; the remainder goes to the Local. Local dues must support both the split to AFGE and the Council and still have adequate monies to fulfill the local’s representational obligations to members of Locals. The Council share allows the Council to conduct its activities on a national level and includes paying for delegates to the Council to attend Council meetings and the AFGE Legislative Conference, activities associated with its legislative and political action, *216 Works*, the Council newsletter and the Council website, [www.Council216.org](http://www.Council216.org), among other

things. Likewise, the AFGE share pays for the lobbying, legislative activities, litigation, publications and many other things.

Council Treasurer Levi Morrow stated, “The Council has not increased dues since 1984. The Council has advanced in the last several years primarily as a result of its legislative program. To maintain that progress and grow, I find that the increase is necessary. EEOC has lost a lot of employees over the last several years but, due to the hiring freeze, they have not been replaced with new employees. Everybody is subject to rising prices and the Council is not exempt from that.”

Faced with these increases each of the eight Locals of the Council will have to assess whether a dues increase for the Local is necessary. To increase dues, Local members will need to vote on the issue and approve a Local dues increase. Without adequate funds for payment to AFGE, the Council and adequate funds for Local activities, members could find themselves without protection.

Members should expect to be hearing from their respective Local presidents in the near future on this issue.

# President Gabrielle Martin and Council 216 Recognized at AFGE National Convention

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gains. Prominent among those was the National Council of EEOC Locals, No. 216 and its president, Gabrielle Martin for its battle and successes against the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and its ill conceived reorganization and wasteful Call Center.

The main work of the convention was the election of officers, the presentation of awards and voting on resolutions for legislative action and changes in the AFGE constitution. The officers to be elected consisted of the National President, National Secretary-Treasurer and National Vice President of the Women's and Fair Practices Department.

The election of officers was held on Wednesday, August 9, 2006. John Gage was reelected National President in a run off election. Incumbent Andrea Brooks was reelected on the first ballot as National Vice President of the Women's and Fair Practices Department; and, J. David Cox was elected on the first ballot as National Secretary-Treasurer.

At various junctures throughout the convention awards were presented to union members, Locals and Councils in different categories. Among those, the National Council of EEOC Locals, No. 216 was presented with an award for Legislative and Political Action. Rachel Shonfield, the Legislative Coordinator for the Council accepted the award. The National Council also received awards for its newsletter, 216 Works, and its website, [www.council216.org](http://www.council216.org). That award was accepted by Michael Davidson, newsletter editor and website coordinator for the Council.

The convention was addressed by a number of different speakers: Rep. Jim Marshall (D – Ga.), National Education Assoc. President Reg Weaver, United Mine Workers President Cecil E. Roberts, Rep. John Barrows (D – Ga.) and AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson.

The bulk of the work on resolution occurred the last two days of the convention. Proposed resolutions were reviewed and



*AFGE held its 37th National Convention in early August speakers included: Rep. Jim Marshall (D – Ga.), National Education Assoc. President Reg Weaver, United Mine Workers President Cecil E. Roberts, Rep. John Barrows (D – Ga.) and AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson. Photo inset: President John Gage addressed convention delegates stressing the need to take back the government from forces hostile to labor.*



recommendations were made first in workshops and then voted upon by the general body. Undoubtedly, the resolution of great interest to members was on the topic of a per capita increase i.e. the amount that AFGE assesses locals on a per member basis. After hours of floor discussion and debate, a resolution increasing the per capita by \$2.00/member/ per month was approved. This increase will go into effect as of January 1, 2007. The focus of discus-

sion on the increase was not on whether to increase the per capita, but, rather, on how much was reasonable and would allow the AFGE to continue its work effectively.

The convention adjourned on Friday, August 11, 2006.

## AFGE ELECTION OF OFFICERS RESULTS

### 1<sup>ST</sup> BALLOT FOR PRESIDENT

<b>John Gage</b>	<b>73,898</b>
<b>Bobby Harnage</b>	<b>68,526</b>
<b>Larry Raney</b>	<b>22,073</b>

### RUNOFF ELECTION FOR PRESIDENT

<b>John Gage</b>	<b>85,507</b>
<b>Bobby Harnage</b>	<b>77,082</b>

### NATIONAL SEC-TREAS

<b>J. David Cox</b>	<b>144,978</b>
<b>Kitty Petticord</b>	<b>19,573</b>

### NATIONAL VP OF WOMEN'S & FAIR PRACTICES

<b>Andrea Brooks</b>	<b>93,575</b>
<b>Marilyn Wiley</b>	<b>70,776</b>

# National Council Meets In Atlanta

**T**he National Council of EEOC Locals, No. 216 (the Council), AFGE, AFL-CIO met in Atlanta, Georgia on August 5 and 6, 2006, preceding the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) convention. Gabrielle Martin, Council president presided over the meeting.

After the formalities of Roll Call and the reading of and adopting of the minutes, the substantive business was commenced with a Financial Report from Council Treasurer, Levi Morrow. Following a discussion and the adoption of the Financial Report, Morrow moved that the Council raised its dues by \$1.00 per pay period. In the ensuing discussion, Morrow noted that the Council had not raised dues since 1984 but an increase was now necessary because of the rising costs of conducting Council business and, more notably, due to the accelerating loss of employees, EEOC-wide, primarily to retirement and the five year hiring freeze. Morrow stated, "Council 216 is the smallest council in AFGE and the fact is that as EEOC employees are leaving, they are not being replaced at the same numerical level." The discussion also noted that a more concerted membership recruitment drive to bring in bargaining unit members who had not as yet become union members was also crucial. Strategies for recruitment were discussed and a committee was formed.

Morrow, also the Council's Chief Negotiator, reported on pending topics: that the petition to include Program Analysts in the bargaining unit was awaiting a decision from the Federal Labor Relations Authority; that ground rules for negotiating a new contract would be discussed with the agency in late August; that the grievances filed by the Council regarding the reclassification of Investigators and Mediators from non-exempt to exempt was going to the third step of the grievance procedure. Council goals also discussed the necessity of continuing to show how EEOC's reorganization is adversely affecting the agency's ability to carry out its mission.

Council Legislative Coordinator Rachel Shonfield reviewed the milestones achieved through the Council's legislative activities, more current events and next

steps. Significant was the budget language from the Senate Appropriations Committee, led by Senator Barbara Mikulski, which saves EEOC from a proposed \$4 million cut. However, the language still has to be voted upon by the full Senate and reconciled with the House budget language and that this was the next big push which required members' participation. Shonfield also reported on the amendment effort by Rep. Stephanie Tubbs Jones and Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton to defund the call center, which did succeed in preventing the call center from becoming permanent. In conjunction with the legislative updates, Martin reported that AFGE's Women's and Fair Practices Department (WFP) had devoted resources for a campaign to address the crisis at EEOC. That department, had coalesced a coalition of civil rights groups to demand better staffing at EEOC, defunding the Call Center and a more adequate budget for EEOC. WFP established a website, [www.protectyourjob.org](http://www.protectyourjob.org), to provide continuing information about the struggle with EEOC. Gabriel Martin reported on the status of the Employee Performance Evalu-



*The Council took home awards for political and legislative action, newsletter and website excellence.*

ation System (EPES), the new evaluation instrument that the EEOC is planning to roll out early in the new fiscal year. Martin, who participated in the workgroup that developed the EPES along with Levi Morrow, capsulized the differences between this system and the current PAS evaluation instrument. Although training for staff was projected for the end of August, when the training will actually be held is uncertain.

The Council meeting concluded with an updating of the Council's strategic plan.

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## Good News/ Bad News

The good news: the call center is not permanent. The bad news: the call center has been extended for another year as a pilot program.

On July 13, 2006 a Commission meeting was scheduled to vote on making the ill reputed call center a permanent fixture at EEOC. But pressure brought to bear on EEOC Chair Cari Dominguez by members of Congress, led by Rep. Stephanie Tubbs Jones (D-OH) and Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC), resulted in the Commissioners only being allowed to vote on a one year "pilot" extension, rather than a permanent call center. The vote of the Commissioners in the order that they cast their votes was; Vice Chair Earp, "No"; Commissioner Silverman, "yes"; Commissioner Ishimaru, "No"; Commissioner

Griffin, "yes." Chair Dominguez, as anticipated, also voted "yes."

The 3-2 Commission vote extended the call center as a pilot for another year. Had Griffin voted not to extend the call center or had she abstained, the call center would have met its demise. Griffin's vote was counter to the evidence of inefficiencies exposed by the Inspector General's report and the Council's year long survey of employees interfacing with the call center. Griffin's vote also ignored calls from hundreds of members of Congress to discontinue the call center, as well as concerns about the call center raised by the civil rights community. Council 216 has written to Commissioner Griffin to express profound disappointment with her decision. The letter is available at [www.council216.org](http://www.council216.org).

## The Locals in Action:

The National Council of EEOC Locals, No. 216 is comprised of eight Locals nationally. The home office of the Locals are New York, Baltimore, Louisville, Chicago, Dallas, St. Louis, Denver and HQ. The following is what the Locals have done for their members.

### Local 2667

- Pat Floyd has succeeded the former President of this Local. Johnnie L. Johnson, the previous Local president was reassigned to the Memphis District Office effective July 8, 2006. Pat is a long time union member and has held many office within the Local including Secretary, Delegate, Chief Steward and Vice President. She is dedicated to protecting the rights of the bargaining unit at EEOC HQ.

### Local 3230

- Grievances have been filed in several of the Local's offices on issues that include poor performance, failure to follow procedures and PIPs. One grievance was resolved; one PIP resulted in the filing of a ULP.
- Negotiations within the Local have been conducted on Intake systems and procedures, end of year pilot projects and hours of work.
- Offices visited this year include Los Angeles, San Diego and Albuquerque.
- Calls with the Local have been held quarterly.
- The Local's experience is that Reorganization has made things worse in that inventory is at an all time high, the amount of time spent in intake has increased due to inadequate staffing, employees are more more stressed, burnt out.

### Local 3504

- A grievance on an employee's performance rating achieved changing the overall rating from

Proficient to Outstanding at the 3rd Step.

- The Local acted on behalf of an employee in danger of being removed to have her moved into a different position.
- The Local assisted an employee in securing a promotion after the employee had been incorrectly deemed unqualified for a position for which she had applied. The Local has assisted several employees in various titles in seeking and obtaining promotions.
- A ULP filed by the Local won the right to information it had requested from the EEOC.
- The Local assisted in obtaining a hardship transfer for a member.
- Through the past year each of the seven offices of the Local had been visited by the Local President at least once including the annual Detroit office picnic this past summer.
- The Local's Legislative Committee and more and more members have participated in the Council's legislative efforts in fighting against the EEOC's ill-conceived initiatives.
- Local 3504's election was concluded and the officers for the next three years will be Michael Davidson, President (Chicago); Stephanie Perkins, Vice President/Delegate (Detroit); Janel Smith, Chief Steward/Alternate Delegate (Chicago); Karen Lanners, Treasurer (Chicago); and, Marion Brewton, Secretary (Chicago).

### Local 3555

- One grievance has been filed regarding telecommuting and resolved at the 2nd Step. However, in general there has been a down-turn in the number of Labor-Management clashes in the New York District Office.
- The Local expresses its thanks to Local Vice President John Thompson for attending the August Council meeting in the absence of the Local President.

### Local 3599

- The Locals annual training/meeting was held in Atlanta, GA on August 3 and 4. The topics were EEO and EEOC's proposed systemic initiative. Charlotte AJ Mark Sims facilitated the training and a mock trial was done. Systemic training and the union's role in it was also covered. Stewards were given "homework" – to research how systemic work would be done in their respective offices.
- The Local will be conducting a major recruitment drive. Over 30 members have retired this year. The Local president, Sharon Baker, will be making office visits and working with the National Council, District 6, AFGE as well as national AFGE. The message: when you become a member, you have a "network" behind you.
- The Local president and Local Delegate, Rachel Shonfield attended the AFGE convention in Atlanta. While there, they visited the Atlanta EEOC office and were accompanied by National Council officers.

### Local 3614

- The Local refers readers to its website at [www.afge3614.org](http://www.afge3614.org) for information about the Local's activities. Amongst the information that can be found on the website are the names of its newly elected Local representatives.
- The Local has completed three major arbitrations.

### Local 3629

- The Local conducted an election for officers recently. The elected officers are: Joe Wilson, President; Rebecca Stith, 1st VP; Anne Gusewelle, 2nd VP; Teri Wilke, Chief Steward; Jan Shelly, Secretary; and, Mark Bretches, Treasurer.
- The Local wishes Kansas City member Bobbie Faulkner and St. Louis member Shirley Smith a happy retirement.
- Both the St. Louis District office

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and the Kansas City Area office are struggling as a result of the January, 2006 reorganization. The offices have fewer staff than ever but need to cover a larger geographic area. Kansas City currently has no clerks/OAAs in the office.

### Local 3637

- The Local has three grievances pending: a Step 2 grievance on a promotion; a Step 1 grievance regarding a disciplinary action; and, a Step 3 grievance on a PAS evaluation.
- The Local renegotiated a new

Telework Agreement for the San Antonio and El Paso offices

- The Local's election of officers was completed in June. The elected officers are Levi M. Morrow, President; Roy Wilkerson, Vice President; Cecil Warren, Treasurer; Danny Lawson, Chief Steward; Pat Palacios, Recording Secretary; Charles House, Sgt.-at-Arms; Pam Edwards, Delegate.
- Local President Morrow represented the Local at the AFGE convention in early August in Atlanta.

More information about each local can be obtained at [www.council216.org](http://www.council216.org).

**W**ho doesn't know by now that EEOC Chair Cari Dominguez has resigned effective August 31, 2006?

Particularly if you are an EEOC employee! Dominguez's term officially expired on July 1, 2006 but, it is not unusual for agency heads to stay on for up to sixty days. Her resignation ended speculation about whether she would stay or go. Rumors included having her returning under a recess appointment by the President of the United States. Dominguez, appointed in 2001, was the longest serving EEOC Chair. One of Dominguez's first acts as EEOC Chair was to institute a hiring freeze that lasted the bulk of her tenure. That act severely crippled the agency in carrying out its mission and, in retrospect, was an omen of worse things in store for EEOC at the hands of Dominguez. The litany of other dubious initiatives include: hiring, when any hire was done, "term" employees i.e. employees hired for a maximum of four years; attempts to eliminate EEOC's federal sector; the implementation of the costly, ineffective call center; a unilateral reorganization which downgraded half of the EEOC's district offices and increased the geographical jurisdiction of most offices without providing additional resources to handle the load. Telling was that even agency

managers thought the Chair's initiatives ill conceived. Dominguez also distinguished herself by implementing her pet reorganization plan in the face of Senate objection.

With the end of the Dominguez rule, Vice Chair Naomi Churchill Earp will ascend to become the Acting Chair and has been designated as the next EEOC Chair by the President.

The departure of the Chair was analyzed by Gabrielle Martin, National Council of EEOC Locals, No. 216 President by saying, "We feel strongly that Chair Dominguez's record was mixed, at best. The EEOC does good work, but it could and should do so much more. However, EEOC's efforts have been hampered by Chair Dominguez's misguided efforts to streamline operations. Dominguez's 'improvements' have only weakened EEOC services and put millions of workers covered by the nation's civil rights laws in jeopardy."

**DOMING DONG**

The Dominguez era does not end with her departure. There is much to be "undone". That is the real legacy that Dominguez has left. What remains to be seen is whether the Dominguez successors are willing to work more closely with EEOC employees and their union to revitalize the agency.

## Mikulski Brings Hope for Full Staffing at Baltimore Office

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of discrimination. The Senator reaffirmed her full commitment to continue supporting EEOC's mission of eradicating discrimination in the workplace. Senator Mikulski expressed her belief that staffing and appropriate funding levels for EEOC's Baltimore office should be commensurate with Maryland's growing population. The meeting concluded with great optimism that EEOC's Baltimore office will soon be a fully staffed district office again with its own District Director and Regional Attorney.

Senator Mikulski has been one of the staunchest allies in the battle against outgoing EEOC Chair Cari Dominguez's reorganization of the EEOC. Dominguez's reorganization, which included the poorly performing Call Center, was implemented on January 3, 2006 over the objections of the Senate Appropriations Committee of which Mikulski serves as Ranking Member. That fight is not over yet.

### *Useful Websites*

The following websites provide useful information for EEOC federal employees. Check them often:

- [www.council216.org](http://www.council216.org) – The National Council's official website.
- [www.afge.org](http://www.afge.org) – American Federation of Government Employees
- [www.protectyourjob.org](http://www.protectyourjob.org) – The latest news on the crisis at EEOC. Send a fax quickly to your Congressional representatives from this site.

# Too Little, Too Late

EEOC Chair Cari Dominguez sent a memo to EEOC employees on August 18, 2006 concerning hiring at EEOC. That memo referenced the “tight budget constraints” under which EEOC has had to operate and how those constraints have “triggered the establishment of hiring priorities and the need for us to be careful and efficient in how we expend our funds.” Obviously, the Chair is attempting to defend the hiring freeze she instituted from the moment she assumed the reins of the EEOC and its debilitating effects. The Chair then goes on to cite that “[t]hrough the exercise of sound management of our resources. . .over 180 new hires since 2004” have been made and that she has “recently authorized an additional 70 new hires. . .to fill in the field.” That all sounds good, but wait. . .

Let’s review: the number of EEOC employees has declined by 20%, or over 500 employees, from 2001 when Dominguez began her administration of the EEOC. The National Council of EEOC Locals, No. 216 (the Council) consistently raised the issue of staffing with the Chair from the onset. Surely, it was a topic many Directors of many offices raised as well. But, for the most part, it all fell on deaf

ears. Dominguez proudly proclaimed that EEOC was “doing more with less”. Then it became apparent that case backlogs were beginning to climb and it became evident that EEOC is doing less with less.

The Chair’s poor attempt to self congratulate glosses over the fact that even as early as 2001, it was clear that EEOC offices around the country were starving for all kinds of employees. Reorganization, buyouts and earlyouts only exacerbated the EEOC’s staffing problem. The “dis-organization” reorganization of January 2006 created more work for most offices with no additional staff. Buyouts and earlyouts further depleted employee ranks. This is what the Chair is characterizing as sound management.

## **Here are some points to ponder regarding the Chair’s figures:**

- Of the “180 new hires”, how many were bargaining unit positions?
- Of the “70 new [future] hires”, what positions will be filled?
- How many field offices received permission to fill any of these positions?
- Was there a net gain in staff for any or all field offices that actually received new staff so far?

- Assuming that each of 53 offices gets one position, has this done any good?
- Will positions vacated in the future be backfilled?
- How many more employees will leave before any of the 70 cross EEOC’s threshold?
- Given the time it takes to hire and train new employees, how did the now former Chair envision that the work of the EEOC will be conducted in the interim?

Rather than the panacea that the Chair portrays, the Council is of the opinion that the Chair’s legacy is one of insuring that understaffing at EEOC will be the norm for the foreseeable future. The recent notice of hiring is simply too little, too late.

See the Council’s Press Release: *“Let Them Eat Cake: EEOC Chair Throws Farewell Party For Herself While Offices Lose More Staff”* at [www.Council216.org](http://www.Council216.org).

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