

GERALD E. CONNOLLY  
11TH DISTRICT, VIRGINIA  
2238 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-1492

FAIRFAX OFFICE:  
4115 ANNANDALE ROAD  
SUITE 103  
ANNANDALE, VA 22003  
(703) 256-3071

PRINCE WILLIAM OFFICE:  
2241-D TACKETT'S MILL DRIVE  
WOODBIDGE, VA 22192  
(571) 408-4407

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-4611**

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM  
SUBCOMMITTEES:  
CHAIRMAN, GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS  
ECONOMIC AND CONSUMER POLICY  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
SUBCOMMITTEES:  
MIDDLE EAST, NORTH AFRICA, AND INTERNATIONAL  
TERRORISM  
ASIA, THE PACIFIC, AND NONPROLIFERATION

November 24, 2020

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Chairwoman  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
The Capitol, Room H-307  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
The Capitol, Room S-128  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1036 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Vice Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
437 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Lowey, Chairman Shelby, Ranking Member Granger, and Vice Chairman Leahy:

The American people rely each day on the expertise and dedication of our nation's federal workforce. On October 21, 2020, President Donald Trump issued an executive order that would undermine the foundation of that workforce—our civil service of non-partisan professionals who serve all Americans without regard to political party.<sup>1</sup> These civil servants use data, evidence, and expertise to conduct scientific research for a coronavirus vaccine, develop the policies to fight fires that are ravaging Colorado and California, and protect our national security from threats at home and abroad.

We write with great urgency to request that the forthcoming continuing resolution or omnibus spending bill include language that reverses the implementation of this executive order and requires the immediate return of any federal employee reclassified pursuant to it.

The executive order contradicts 137 years of tradition and practice based on merit systems principles.<sup>2</sup> It would expedite the hiring of political appointees into jobs without regard to merit and place them in roles best served by career civil servants—including economists, scientists, and data analysts. This action could multiply the number of political appointees within the federal workforce by tens of thousands and permit the firing of current federal

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<sup>1</sup> Exec. Order No. 13957 (Oct. 21, 2020).

<sup>2</sup> Pendleton Civil Service Reform Act, Pub. L. No. 47-27 (1883).

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
The Honorable Richard Shelby  
The Honorable Kay Granger  
The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
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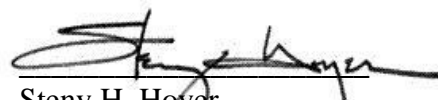
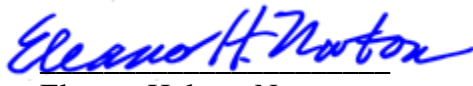
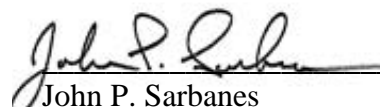
employees whom agency heads determine make “substantive contributions to executive branch policy.”<sup>3</sup>

According to recent media reports, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has already completed its request for reclassifying positions pursuant to the executive order. The report states that “OMB Director Russ Vought has classified 88% of that agency’s workforce, 425 employees.”<sup>4</sup>

This executive order, which the Trump Administration is rushing to implement without adequate analysis just weeks before the President leaves office, could precipitate an exodus from the federal government, leaving federal agencies without deep institutional knowledge, expertise, experience, and the ability to develop and implement long-term policy strategies. In addition, if the incoming Biden Administration repeals the executive order in whole or in part, implementing it now would waste significant time and resources as a result of the unnecessary classification and reclassification of thousands of federal employees.

We ask that you join us in reversing this harmful executive order. Please consider using some or all of the legislative language in the Saving the Civil Service Act, sponsored by Rep. Gerald E. Connolly, House Majority Leader Steny H. Hoyer and Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney.<sup>5</sup>

Sincerely,

  
Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress  
Steny H. Hoyer  
House Majority Leader  
Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress  
John P. Sarbanes  
Member of Congress

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<sup>3</sup> Exec. Order No. 13957 (Oct. 21, 2020).

<sup>4</sup> *OMB Lists Positions Stripped of Job Protection Under Trump Order*, Real Clear Politics (Nov. 21, 2020) (online at [www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2020/11/21/omb\\_lists\\_workers\\_stripped\\_of\\_job\\_protection\\_under\\_trump\\_order\\_144708.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2020/11/21/omb_lists_workers_stripped_of_job_protection_under_trump_order_144708.html)).

<sup>5</sup> H.R. 8687, The Saving the Civil Service Act (online at [www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/8687?s=1&r=1](http://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/8687?s=1&r=1)).

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Jackie Speier  
Member of Congress



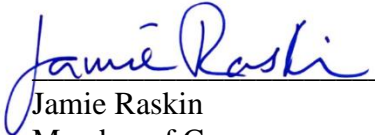
Stacey E. Plaskett  
Member of Congress



Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress



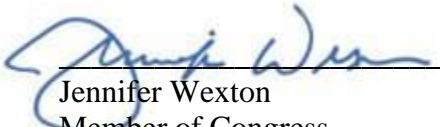
Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress



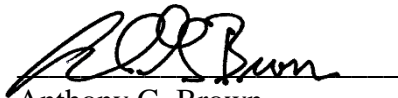
Donald S. Beyer Jr.  
Member of Congress



Jennifer Wexton  
Member of Congress



David Trone  
Member of Congress



Anthony G. Brown  
Member of Congress