



2019 LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

GUARANTEEING WORKPLACE FAIRNESS

A merit-based, non-partisan civil service is the backbone of our federal government. It is imperative that our career civil servants who are charged with implementing complex federal programs on behalf of the American people can continue to do their work with dedication and skill, regardless of changes in elected leadership. Proposals to eliminate or restrict collective bargaining and due process rights for these employees would return the civil service to the dysfunctional “spoils system” of the past, driven by patronage and political favoritism rather than ability and merit. NTEU supports maintaining current employee rights and requirements for independent reviews of agency personnel actions to ensure a fair and transparent workplace where employees continue to have a voice and are not afraid to blow the whistle when they see waste or wrongdoing.

Last year the President issued three Executive Orders (EOs) that impact bargaining and due process rights for both individual federal employees and federal employee labor organizations. These EOs seek to undermine federal employee unions and their ability to operate in federal workplaces and imposed severe restrictions on the use of official time which is key for ensuring unions can continue to assist federal employees with workplace issues such as retaliation, discrimination, and sexual harassment. The EOs also sought to erode the constitutionally protected statutory employee due process, increasing the chances that employees are treated unfairly.

This attack on the rights of federal employees right to be represented is not new. In previous Congresses, bills have been introduced to eliminate or restrict due process rights as well as collective bargaining in the federal workplace. In the federal sector, there is no requirement that an individual join and pay dues to a union. However, federal unions are required to represent every individual in a bargaining unit, whether or not they choose to pay dues. Federal unions are prohibited from striking and have much narrower collective bargaining rights than their private sector counterparts. Federal workers deserve a voice in their workplace and NTEU opposes efforts to eliminate current rights and indirect efforts that aim to undermine our ability to effectively represent our members.

In 2017, the President disbanded the National Council on Federal Labor Management Relations by rescinding an EO that established these forums to improve productivity and effectiveness of the federal government. NTEU strongly protested the move, stressing that these councils help to transform often adversarial labor-management relationships into problem-solving partnerships. NTEU supports bills introduced by Senator Brian Schatz (D-HI) and Representative Elijah Cummings (D-MD) that would reinstate the Council and require agency-level forums, ensuring a voice for frontline federal employees.

NTEU urges:

- **Support for a professional, non-partisan civil service with employee collective bargaining and due process with appeal rights to prevent politicization of the civil service and to protect whistleblowers.**
- **Opposition to anti-worker proposals seeking to eliminate or weaken collective bargaining rights for federal workers or that fail to protect workers from arbitrary or unfair job actions.**
- **Support S. 530 and H.R. 1316, legislation to re-establish the National Council on Federal Labor Management Relations and agency-level forums to provide for common-sense collaboration.**