



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Affiliated with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers



NFFE News Story

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FEDERAL EMPLOYEES NOT FEELING THE LOVE FROM CONGRESS THIS VALENTINE'S DAY

Valentine's Day is around the corner, and it appears Congress will not be sending federal employees any flowers this year. Instead, Congress has unleashed numerous bills aimed squarely at chipping away at the pay, job security and right to join a Union for federal employees. Below are short descriptions of three bills recently introduced that NFFE and our allies are fighting on Capitol Hill:

H.R. 3023 – An increasingly popular way for members of Congress to disguise their attacks on Unions and employee due process protections is to advocate for extended probationary periods. H.R. 3023 would increase the probationary period for federal employees from one year to two years. It would also increase the probationary period to two years following formal training or licensure of an employee. Employees under probationary periods are de facto at-will employees and are not afforded the same protections granted to the rest of the federal workforce. Not only would this change be a blow to the federal workforce, extending employee probationary periods would damage workplace accountability because potential whistleblowers would not have the essential protections necessary to expose abuse early in their careers. There is no evidence that suggests doubling the length of the probationary period for federal employees improves government performance. NFFE strongly opposes this legislation.



February has seen numerous anti-federal employee bills introduced in Congress

H.R. 4359 – A growing area of concern for lawmakers charged with oversight of the federal workforce is the run-away use of administrative leave by agency managers when dealing with pending employee investigations. While NFFE encourages a discussion on approaches to reform the overdependence on paid administrative leave status during employee investigations, H.R. 4359 is not an acceptable reform. The bill restricts employees to 14 days of administrative leave each calendar year, and nothing else. The bill does not address what happens after the fourteen days expires, and does not provide any guidance on how to actually reform the use of administrative leave – it simply places an arbitrary restriction on the number of days available to agency management to use. The effects of this legislation are untold, and would certainly result in federal employees being treated unfairly. NFFE strongly opposes this legislation.

And finally, one of the most direct attacks federal employee unions have seen in years...

H.R. 4461 – This legislation, introduced by Rep. Tom Price (R-GA), does not disguise its intent of destroying federal employee unions for a moment. This bill places restrictions on Union members and their dues transfers, makes all non-voting employees in union elections an automatic "no" vote (running afoul of the democracy of union elections), among other largely misleading provisions. Make no mistake about it, this bill would be aimed at destroying federal employee unions, nothing more. NFFE strongly opposes this legislation.

It is worth noting that all of the above bills have simply been introduced in Congress. At this point, only H.R. 3023 has passed out of a committee markup hearing on the House side – and it lacks a Senate companion. NFFE is fighting around the clock to make sure all of these bills die in the current session of Congress without advancing to receive full House votes.