



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Affiliated with the International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers, AFL-CIO

June 10, 2014

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE) and the 110,000 federal employees we represent throughout the United States and abroad, I am writing to urge your opposition to the Gingrey Amendment to eliminate the use of official time at federal agencies funded by the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2015 (H.R. 4745).

The Gingrey Amendment would serve no purpose but to erode collective bargaining rights for civil service federal employees at *greater* cost to American taxpayers. Federal unions are legally required to provide representation to all members of a bargaining unit, whether or not the workers elect to pay voluntary union dues. Union representation for employees working their way through administrative procedures is a cost-effective process for administrating and adjudicating agency policies. The alternative to official time is for government agencies to needlessly pay for costly third party attorney and arbitrator fees. The Gingrey Amendment would eliminate the use official time which is critical to the cost-saving arrangement which benefits agencies, workers, and taxpayers.

Official time is essential to maintaining workplace safety. Union representatives elected by their peers in the workplace use official time to set procedures to protect employees from on-the-job hazards. Without official time, the safety of federal employees could be compromised. This would cause the incidence of injuries on the job to increase, employee morale to suffer, and the number of workers forced into the federal workers' compensation program to increase. Making the federal workplace safer is just one important way *of many* that official time is necessary and in the public interest, as the law requires.

Unlike those who attempt to trivialize the importance of official time, using this time for internal union business is strictly prohibited by law. Under current law, official time may not be used to solicit membership, conduct internal union meetings, elect union officers, or engage in any partisan political activities. The notion that official time is used for these purposes is blatantly false.

Again, I strongly urge you to vote 'NO' on the Gingrey Amendment to H.R. 4745. If you have any questions, please contact NFFE Legislative Director Randy Erwin at (202) 216-4451 or rerwin@nffe.org.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

William R. Dougan
National President