



# NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Affiliated with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers



## NFFE News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **NFFE Hails Bipartisan Fed Retirement Fairness Act, Providing Long Overdue Retirement Security for Former Temporary and Seasonal Federal Employees**

**Washington, D.C.** – Today, Rep. Derek Kilmer (D-WA) and Rep. Tom Cole (R-OK) have introduced the [Federal Retirement Fairness Act](#). This act will allow former seasonal and temporary federal employees the option to ‘buy-back’ retirement contributions to retire on time. These seasonal or temporary employees include wildland firefighters during fire season, park rangers during tourist season, civilian personnel to assist the military during special operations, programs and agencies during transitions, and so on.

Often these workers become permanent full-time federal employees, many with years of seasonal or temporary experience to their name, but with no way of counting that time toward retirement. Under the Federal Retirement Fairness Act, these workers have the option to ‘buy-back’ their time as a seasonal or temporary employee, paying the normal retirement contributions plus interest back to the government. Because the employee is paying (plus interest) for this time to count towards their retirement, the burden to the taxpayer is minimal.

“Seasonal and temporary federal employees who answer the call of duty deserve the same level of deference as the permanent employees they work with,” said NFFE National President Randy Erwin. “It is unconscionable to ignore temporary or seasonal labor upon becoming permanent employees, given many of these employees risk their lives and health for these jobs, as thousands of wildland firefighters do each year. To deny counting that time on the job is akin to creating a second class of employee. If they put the time in, they deserve to have it counted toward retirement.”

Federal employees that began their career as temporary employees are not able to contribute the requisite number of years to draw full retirement benefits after 30 years of service. These dedicated workers then face a choice: leave the federal service without full retirement benefits or work longer than their peers to obtain their full retirement benefits. In places like the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, where people work with their hands, this is a choice between two bad options: Retire without the security you thought you had or put your health at risk by working a few years longer than the rest of your peers in a physically demanding job.

“It is long overdue that former seasonal or temporary civil servants have the option to count their time serving our Nation towards their well-deserved retirement benefits,” continued Erwin. “All federal employees should have the freedom of choice to retire on time after their years of service if they have made the necessary contributions to do so. The bill will ensure that all federal employees, regardless of their initial hiring status, are granted the same opportunity for the same amount of work. Frankly, it has been a long time coming and I thank Representatives Kilmer and Cole for their leadership on this issue. It is time to level the playing field for temporary and seasonal workers.”

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*Established in 1917, the National Federation of Federal Employees is the oldest union representing civil service federal employees. NFFE represents 110,000 federal employees in 35 departments and agencies government-wide.*

*NFFE is affiliated with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, AFL-CIO.*

*For more information, go to [www.nffe.org](http://www.nffe.org).*