

NFFE News



NFFE Members Attend White House Federal Workers Roundtable

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Last week, several National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE) leaders attended a roundtable at the White House, participating alongside fellow union members from the Federal Workers Alliance (FWA), a coalition of labor unions representing civil servants.

Participants from the White House included three Senior Labor Advisors to the President, in addition to the White House Political Director, Emmy Ruiz. Leaders from both the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) participated in the discussion, including OPM Acting Director Rob Shriver.

In terms of general federal workforce issues, NFFE leaders raised concerns over the low pay increase proposed for FY 25, the need for confirmation of Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) nominees, how to best use Labor-Management Partnerships, and the need for an increase to the annual uniform allowance.

Carl Houtman and Andy Vanderheuel, leaders from the NFFE Forest Service Council, highlighted the impact of climate change on both wildfires and structural fires, and the need for enhanced national responses to protect communities across the country. Vanderheuel also reiterated the pay and retention issues facing wildland firefighters and asked the Acting Director of OPM to expedite the agency's review of the hazard pay expansion request from the Forest Service. White House staff asserted that both the President and Vice President recognize the significance of the issues facing the workforce and that Forest Service employees have the full support of the White House.

Leaders from the NFFE Veterans Affairs Council, Jeff Shapiro, Robyn Bolgla, and Roosevelt Davis discussed issues facing Title 38 employees, who cannot bargain over compensation, safety, or staffing, leading to dissatisfaction for workers and diminished care for veterans. Shapiro also raised concerns about hiring freezes and buyouts at the VA, and the lack of transparency from the agency. Another issue highlighted by Davis was that budget concerns and the lack of staffing create immense challenges because there is more work to be done than current staffing levels can accomplish.

NFFE Passport leader Patricia Spencer provided insight into how passport adjudication is front-line defense and an essential service to national security. Spencer discussed the trend of passport services heading toward artificial intelligence and privatization, as well as the need to keep the adjudication process in person with the responsibility tasked to qualified union personnel.

“This was an incredible opportunity for our members to speak face to face with top level staff at the White House, who are responsible for the direction of the civil service,” said NFFE National President Randy Erwin. “The issues discussed at the roundtable are incredibly important to not only our members and their agency missions, but also national security and the wellbeing of veterans and Americans across the country. This event highlights how NFFE members can impact their workplace and how we as a union can hold leaders accountable to helping workers fulfill the critical missions of their agencies. Thank you to President Biden, Vice President Harris, and leaders from the White House, OPM, and OMB for inviting NFFE leaders to this important event.”

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