

Important Legislative Update June 12, 2019

A team of our officers recently discussed with the offices of Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senator Kyrsten Sinema the challenges faced by federal employees in light of the unwavering hostility of the current administration to those of us who serve our country as members of the civil service.

About a year ago, I spoke with all of you, in person or through teleconference, about the dangers posed by certain Executive Orders issued by the President. Since that time, many of my predictions, unfortunately, have come to fruition.

Agency by agency, federal employees have lost valued employee benefits such as telework and flexible work schedules. Progressive discipline is now regarded as quaint and to be ignored in favor of harsher penalties. The Department of Education; Veteran's Administration; DOD; Department of Labor are among the growing list of hostile agencies. HUD will soon be added to this list for employees represented by AFGF where telework, for example, will be severely constrained or eliminated (employees will be required to be in the office four days per week).

A consortium of federal employee unions prevented the application of many aspects of the Executive Orders (the district court decision remains on appeal) but the essence of the EO's are being implemented through the agencies, either by unilaterally imposing changes or by winning virtually all arbitration decisions issued by the Federal Impasses Panel on changes to working conditions.

Our team of Ken Einbinder, Sue Sheftel, Janie Lopez and myself met at the Hill offices and discussed the desirability of freezing our current labor management agreement in the absence of fair treatment under the Federal Labor Management Relations statute.

Appropriations language freezing collective bargaining agreements has been reported out of the House Appropriations Committee and is going to the full House for a vote (along with our 3.1% pay raise, etc.).

While we came up with this idea independently, and the presentations independently, it most likely had the simultaneous support of NFFE national and the other federal employee unions since it had become obvious legislative intervention is the only way to preserve employee rights.

I will keep you posted as the legislation progresses.

On behalf of your NFFE team, thank you for your encouragement and your support.

Dennis Murakami
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NFFE-1450