



DEFCON Legislative Priorities

The American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) represents over 800,000 federal and District of Columbia employees, of which approximately 250,000 are Department of Defense civilian employees who are crucial to maintaining military readiness, ensuring that the military services' state-of-the-art weapon systems are in a good state of repair and available to armed services members for their use in training and operations. Fighter aircraft and cargo planes, nuclear submarines and aircraft carriers, tanks and armored personnel carriers – these are just some of the complex weapons systems skilled AFGE members employed by the Defense Department maintain to defend American and keep the peace.

Enacting Fiscal Year 2025 Military Appropriations and Military Construction Acts

Four months into Fiscal Year 2025 and none of the 12 annual appropriations bills that fund the federal government have been enacted, including the bills that fund the Department of Defense and military construction. The current Continuing Resolution is set to expire on March 14. Failure to meet this deadline could result in a government shutdown. Equally as troubling is the 2023 Fiscal Responsibility Act requires Congress to pass federal appropriations for FY2025 or sequestration will commence in May, reducing defense and non-defense funding levels by one percent. Congress must put politics aside and pass bills that provide the Defense Department the resources to meet America's security needs and support our servicemembers.

Preparing for the Fiscal Year 2026 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA)

The NDAA provides the critical authorities our military needs to protect our country and deter future conflicts, while supporting servicemembers and their families who carry out that mission every day. Congress must work in a bipartisan, bicameral manner to pass a FY2026 NDAA that respects the important role DOD civilian employees serve in supporting active and reserve military personnel. It is critical that Congress invest and uplift DOD civilian employees, who provide much needed experience and expertise to keep our warfighters prepared for their next mission.

Federal Firefighter's Families First Act (H.R. 759)

This bipartisan legislation would ensure federal firefighters, including hundreds of Defense Department firefighters, are eligible for the same full and fair retirement benefits as their state and local counterparts. This legislation, introduced by Reps. Gerry Connolly (D-VA) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), would bring the hourly pay rate for a firefighter in line with regular GS employees. Additionally, the legislation would correct how federal firefighters' retirement is calculated by taking into account the number of overtime hours worked by federal firefighters each year to allow for a more accurate and equitable retirement calculation.