



THE GOVERNMENT STANDARD

For current and retired government workers and their families since 1933 • American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO July/August 2018

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See You in Court, Mr. President
It's Time for AFGE Members to Stand
Up Together



A Message from AFGE's National President *J. David Cox Sr.*

Brothers and Sisters,

At 5:15 p.m. on the Friday before Memorial Day weekend, your union was notified that President Trump was issuing a series of executive orders gutting your rights in the workplace and your union's ability to represent you.

Your union sprung immediately into action: by 6 p.m. we were on a press call with reporters throughout the country. The General Counsel's Office worked through the weekend on our first lawsuit which was filed within two business days- the first union to do so. The mobilization, organizing, field services, and other teams went to work to develop all the resources you need to fight this fight.

You've heard me say it so often that it might sound like I'm running around telling you the sky is falling, but Sisters and Brothers I have to say it again, we have never seen these types of attacks.

If you have seen emails from me and your union asking you to pick up the phone and call your members of Congress, but haven't done it, now is the time. If you have seen emails from me and your union asking you to update your contact information so we have a personal cell phone number and a personal email address for you, but you haven't done it, now is the time.

There's no time to sit on our hands or wish that things were another way. Every member of this union and every worker that is a potential member needs to step forward and start pushing back, speaking up, and taking action.

I understand that every member of our union takes great pride in the work they do. We are the most patriotic and duty-driven people throughout America. We are the front line keeping our country safe, healthy, and strong. We are the protectors of our democracy, but some have forgotten a critical step. We've forgotten to stand up for ourselves.

This moment requires us all to join together – stand

together and win together!

Silence will not work, inaction will not work. We have to embrace our pride and our power for what we do and together change the story.

Talk to your colleagues, organize a work event to get together to meet and collaborate with your coworkers, or talk with your union reps and coordinate a visit to your lawmaker's nearest office.

Our strength is our passion and our collective action. We all have to come together to turn back the assaults on our union, our rights, and the great work we do for the country. We took an oath to protect our nation, and together, we will fulfill that oath.

In Solidarity,

AFGE—THE GOVERNMENT STANDARD

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AFGE Sues President Trump Over Executive Orders



The American Federation of Government Employees has filed lawsuits challenging three executive orders issued by President Trump that gut workers' protections and rights.

President Trump on May 25 signed three executive orders that chip away at due process and collective bargaining rights for federal employees and impede employee representation at the job site. AFGE's first lawsuit, filed immediately after Trump issued his executive orders, challenged the executive order on official time as a violation of the right to freedom of association guaranteed by the First Amendment, and as exceeding the president's authority.

The second lawsuit challenges the other two executive orders on the grounds that they exceed the president's authority under the U.S. Constitution by violating the separation of powers and exceeding current law.

"These executive orders are clearly at odds with what Congress has mandated by law," said AFGE

General Counsel David Borer. "These directives from the White House display a shocking lack of respect for the Constitution and represent a serious overreach of the President's executive powers. We will not allow this or any administration to trample on the rights of federal workers."

A number of other unions have joined or been consolidated into AFGE's first lawsuit.

"AFGE is leading the fight to stop these unconstitutional and illegal attacks on the rights of federal workers," said AFGE National President J. David Cox Sr. "We're going to continue to fight these attacks every step of the way: we're fighting for our hardworking employees, we're fighting to preserve government services, and we're fighting for our democracy."

Each of these executive orders strikes at the core of your representation and rights in the workplace. We need allies in public office to help us serve the American people better, not enemies.

**What You Can
Do Right Now**

There are many ways you can fight back against these illegal EOs. Visit www.afge.org/fightback to see what you can do.



Here's How The Executive Orders Eliminate Checks and Balances:

Gut Union Representation on the Job

President Trump's executive order targets "official time"- the time your union reps use to represent employees in the workplace, such as filing a grievance on your behalf challenging an unfair termination. Here's what the EO does:



Attack On Representational Time

Drastically cuts or eliminates the hours union representatives are available to respond to your needs. Bars union representatives from handling employee grievances on duty time.



No Union Workspace

Kicks unions out of the building, not even letting them use space to prepare for agency meetings, making it almost impossible for you to get the help you need when and where you need it.



Unsafe Workplaces

Makes your workplace less safe and secure by prohibiting employees on official time from exposing dangerous working conditions to members of Congress. If this EO had been in effect last year, Bureau of Prisons correctional officers wouldn't have been able to win passage of a life-saving pepper spray law.



Workplace Harassment

When things like discrimination, intimidation, or harassment come up in your workplace, union reps will have fewer or no hours to respond and aid you in filing grievances or other ways of fighting back.

Weaken Collective Bargaining

This EO targets how your union negotiates workplace protocols such as reasonable accommodations for those with disabilities, employee training, overtime, telework, and flexible work schedules. For example:



Hostile Proposals for Employees

It creates a workgroup chaired by the OPM director to develop proposals that could be hostile to employees and without any input from you or your union.



New Rules, Fewer Rights

It orders agencies to open all contracts for re-negotiation immediately if possible, or once the current contracts expire, so the agency can implement new rules that give the agency and management more power and give you fewer rights.



Meaningless Timelines

Sets arbitrary timelines – less than one year, preferably 4 to 6 months – for completion of bargaining before sending your contract to be gutted by anti-worker political appointees.



Critical Issues Off the Table

Narrows the issues your union can negotiate on your behalf. This EO would have a fatal effect as life-saving subjects such as staffing levels at understaffed VA and DoD hospitals and federal prisons would be off the table entirely.

Subvert Merit Principles

This EO targets employee safeguards against retaliation, discrimination, and unfair termination, suspension, and performance evaluation. This EO essentially gives managers a license to discriminate and retaliate with impunity. For example:



No Fairness in Disciplinary Actions

Removes the use of “comparators” that ensure fairness in disciplinary actions, meaning there doesn’t have to be the same standard or reason to fire one employee used for another employee. Comparators are necessary to make sure firings aren’t discriminatory or politically motivated. It also limits the use of progressive discipline principles.



Grievances Prohibited

It prohibits employees from filing a grievance challenging an unfair performance evaluation, pay raise, bonus, or any form of incentive pay. This means if your boss doesn’t like you for any reason, you may not get a pay raise regardless of your performance – and you can’t do anything about it.

How to Fight Back Against Trump's Union-Busting Executive Orders

Find more ways to take action at afge.org/fightback



Call Congress to Oppose EOs 1-844-669-5146



Write an Email to Your Lawmakers



Write a Letter to Your Lawmakers



Have a Friend Write a Letter to Congress



Write a Letter to the Editor



Use #EOhellNo on Social Media



Find Out More About PAC



Update Your Contact Information



EO Summary and Talking Points



Report a Worksite Issue or Concern

What AFGE is doing

We have held emergency telephone town halls for members and leaders, which have been attended by thousands. Our frequent telephone town halls are a great way to get your questions answered and stay up to date on the most current information and union news.

Our story has been breaking in the press! Your union's response to the EOs has been featured in

2,500 news stories throughout the country. Our website dedicated to fighting back the EOs (www.afge.org/fightback) features much of our press coverage and other resources you need to get involved.

AFGE has also launched the **#EOHellNo** campaign on social media, which attracted support and attention, propelling us to trend on Twitter. We have won support from 89 members of Congress from both sides of the aisles who sent letters to Trump demanding that he rescind the EOs.

Contributions or gifts to AFGE PAC are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. All contributions to AFGE PAC are voluntary and will be used for political purposes. Contributions are not a condition of membership or employment and refusal to contribute is free of reprisal. In accordance with federal law, AFGE PAC accepts contributions only from AFGE members, executive and administrative personnel, and their families. Contributions from other persons will be returned.

Supercharged Members Take Action at Local Events Across the Nation



Federal employees' fight to strengthen our union, expand workplace rights, and protect working families' pay and benefits isn't just done in DC – it's happening all over the country. Every event, big or small, makes a difference. Today we highlight some of the amazing work being done by our brothers and sisters across the nation.

Lunch and Learns: On June 7, Local 2328 held a Lunch and Learn at the Hampton VA to educate members on the ongoing attacks on VA employees

and the importance of increasing membership to fight back. They also held a PAC event to help pro-worker candidates get elected.

Rally for Title 5 Rights: On June 8, Local 448 rallied outside of Norfolk International Airport to bring attention to the dire need for a legislative fix to give TSOs Title 5 rights.

Picket for Worker Safety: On June 15, Local 3969 held an informational picket outside FCC Victorville in Victorville, Calif., to bring awareness to the dangers of the recent Executive Orders and budget and staffing cuts.

Staff the VA: Local 1384 will hold a rally outside of the Fort Wayne VA Northern Indian Health Care System on July 26 to raise awareness about the importance of immediately filling the 49,000+ VA vacancies nationwide.

Join an event near you or consider hosting one yourself. Visit the AFGE calendar at www.afge.org/events.

2018 AFGE National Convention Notices

CONSTITUTIONAL RESOLUTIONS to be considered at the convention will soon be available at www.afge.org/2018ConventionResolutions.

Registration closes July 14th for the 41st AFGE National Convention. Please encourage your delegates to register as soon as possible.

When: Monday, August 13, 2018 from 10:00 a.m. to Friday, August 17, 2018 at 5:00 p.m., PT

Where: Paris Las Vegas, 3655 S Las Vegas Boulevard, Las Vegas, NV 89109

Hotel registration: Group Rates end July 20th



Early Check-In is from:

Saturday, August 11th: 4-6 p.m. and 7 p.m - 9 p.m.

Sunday, August 12th: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.; 3-6 p.m.; 7 - 10 p.m.

Women and Fair Practices Events

- *Young Workers Meet Up, August 12*
- *AFGE Pride (LGBTQ) Meeting: Pride...Not Prejudice, August 14*
- *Women's Breakfast: Changing the Things I Cannot Accept, August 16*
- *"All White Attire" Reception, August 16*

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Passage of Firefighter Cancer Registry Act Huge Victory for AFGE



According to a study done by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, firefighters have higher rates of cancer than the U.S. population as a whole. But the government doesn't consider occupational illnesses job-related disabilities, and so federal firefighters get no occupational disability compensation if they get diagnosed with cancer or other illnesses caused by their rigorous occupation.

Unlike their state counterparts, federal firefighters must specify the precise exposure that caused his or her illness in order to get any kind of compensation. This burden of proof weighs heavily and unfairly against them as they respond to all kinds of emergency

calls under various conditions.

That's why the AFGE Firefighters Steering Committee worked closely with members of Congress to help pass the Firefighter Cancer Registry Act, which requires the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to develop and maintain a voluntary registry of firefighters to collect history and occupational information that can be linked to existing data in state cancer registries.

The bill, H.R. 931, passed the House last year and passed the Senate in May with minor changes. The House approved the Senate's amended version June 29, sending the bill to the president for his expected signature.

Under the bill, the registry will include specific information such as the number and type of fire incidents attended by an individual. The CDC must also develop guidance for states and firefighting agencies regarding the registry and develop a process for making registry data available for research without a fee.

Members and Allies Stand Up to Save Social Security Field Offices



AFGE members and allies rallied to protest the closure of the North Baltimore Social Security Office.

The Social Security Administration admitted that a wave of baby boomer retirements is a problem. But instead of opening more offices to meet the higher demand, the administration is closing them down. They want seniors and people with disabilities to file for benefits online and wade through all the rules and regulations themselves without human beings to guide and give them advice.

"Not everyone who is 65 is online," said retiree Susan Flashman. "People need services."

Witold Skwierczynski, president of AFGE Social Security Council 220 that represents 28,000 SSA employees nationwide, took issue with SSA's excuse for closings of SSA offices, a recent one being a lack of space. They can't find space for this tiny office? "That's a lie," he said.

This North Baltimore office in the Rotunda Mall sits right next to senior apartment complexes, and even though the mall itself is trying to be upscale, it is surrounded by rowhouses with chipped paint in an unmistakably working-class neighborhood. "We need offices like this to stay open," Skwierczynski told the protesters.

Speakers included Sen. Ben Cardin's staff member Renee Cohen; Metropolitan Baltimore Council, AFL-CIO, President Jermaine Jones; AFGE National Secretary-Treasurer Joseph Flynn; and AFGE Local 1923 Vice President Mary Camper.

WARNING: Passage of VA Mission Act An Open Door to Privatization



AFGE members are fighting back

The VA MISSION Act, which became law on June 6th, focuses on funneling dollars to the private, for-profit sector, will allow for the outsourcing of 36 health care categories including mental health care and spinal cord injury care and allow a private corporate-style commission with unfettered power to decide which VA facilities to close. The act will force veterans into a for-profit private hospital after the closure of their VA.

AFGE had attempted to amend the VA MISSION Act to ensure that the only health care system tailored to the unique needs of veterans was preserved but

was unable to secure the necessary provisions in the House and Senate.

By voting to pass S. 2372, Congress is punting on their responsibility to care for the men and women who have served our country and are taking an extremely dangerous step toward privatization. It is a sad day for the 9.3 million veterans who rely on the VA for their health care and for the more than 120,000 veterans who work there.

AFGE thanks Senators Cory Booker, Jeff Merkley, Mike Rounds, Bernie Sanders, and Brian Schatz for standing up to privatizers by siding with veterans and the working people who serve them every day. We also thank those in the House who stood by veterans and working people as well.

Since the 2014 waitlist crisis was first exposed by rank-and-file workers – many of whom are facing firing or the closure of their VA facility now – AFGE has been sounding the alarm on corporate interests seeking to privatize the VA. Now privatizers backed by the Koch brothers are closer than ever to achieving the goal of making a buck off the backs of our veterans while forcing them into an inferior system of care.

Federal Reorganization Would Gut Many Agencies

Under the guise of government reorganization, the Trump administration on June 21 released its reorganization plan aimed at decimating and politicizing government agencies and programs.

“There’s little reason to believe this reorganization plan is anything more than a scheme to eliminate essential programs and public-service jobs, reward or punish political appointees depending on their allegiance to the White House, and privatize government programs to reward political donors,” said AFGE President J. David Cox Sr. “Taken together with President Trump’s directives targeting federal workers, the reorganization plans are an

unprecedented power grab and have nothing to do with improving the efficiency or effectiveness of government.”

Here are just some of the outrageous plans the Trump administration has come up with: merge the Education and Labor departments although they have little in common; dismantle the Office of Personnel Management in an attempt to politicize the civil service; move food assistance programs for the poor to HHS and rename it; consolidate hazardous materials management programs so the EPA will have a tougher time identifying polluters; and privatize the postal service.

An Update on the 2019 Defense Authorization Act

Because of your calls, letters, and visits to your members of Congress, we were able to fight off bad amendments to the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that the Senate passed June 18 in an 85-10 vote.

In addition, we were able to fight off bad amendments to the House version of the bill that passed the House on May 24. In the House bill, we were able to:

- Repeal a requirement for civilian personnel caps
- Prohibit converting civilian positions to military when inappropriate or too costly
- Restore contractor inventory—a key condition for the A-76 moratorium
- Require a program line for contract services in the defense budget to increase efficiency

But there are some provisions in the House bill

that we need to defeat when the House and Senate negotiators meet in conference to reconcile the two versions of the bill.

These bad provisions would:

- Reorganize and reduce by 25 percent Defense agencies
- Open the door for contractors to narrow the scope of what is considered a services contract, thus making it easier to privatize civilian jobs
- Expand the use of personal services contracts, where contractors take on the role of government employees

AFGE will continue to monitor these bills. Stay tuned for more updates.

Our Big Win for Officer Safety



AFGE Council 33 President Eric Young and Helen Andujar, wife of Lt. Albarati prepare for a day of lobbying on Capitol Hill.

After years of hard work and advocacy from the AFGE Council of Prison Locals, the House of Representatives recently passed a bill that would make Bureau of Prisons correctional officers' commute to and from work a lot safer.

On May 15, the House passed the Lieutenant

Oswaldo Albarati Correctional Officer Self-Protection Act introduced by Rep. David McKinley of West Virginia to make permanent the BOP policy of providing gun lockers to correctional workers so that prison employees can defend themselves on their commute to and from work.

The bill, H.R. 613, is named after Lieutenant Oswaldo Albarati, a correctional officer at Metropolitan Detention Center Guaynabo, Puerto Rico, who broke up a contraband smuggling group in prison. The group organized a deadly retaliation against Albarati. He was shot and killed in 2013 by a group of gunmen on the highway.

“The Lieutenant Oswaldo Albarati Correctional Officer Self-Protection Act guarantees that our officers will have a secure place to store their firearms to defend themselves, and will help us ensure that husbands, wives, children, and grandchildren not be left behind because their loved ones were killed commuting to and from their place of work,” said Eric Young, president of the AFGE Council of Prison Locals.

AFGE Members Build Homes for Veterans With Habitat for Humanity



For government employees, public service isn't just a phrase – it's a calling.

That's why AFGE's new partnership with Habitat for Humanity makes so much sense. Through this partnership, which is being spearheaded by the AFGE Veterans Committee, AFGE's National and District offices will work with locals to help repair and beautify veterans' homes through Habitat's Veterans Build program.

"Our public service as federal employees shouldn't start and end at the job site," said Phil Glover, an Army veteran who currently serves as AFGE National Vice President for District 3. "That's why I'm so proud we're partnering with Habitat to make lives better for the women and men who have served our country in uniform."

AFGE and Habitat launched the new partnership in April with a day of service during the I AM 2018 conference in Memphis, Tenn. About 20 AFGE members and staff volunteered their day to beautify the exterior of a veteran's home in the Bearwater Park neighborhood of Memphis.

AFGE is seeking locals to partner with Habitat for the Veterans Build program. Locals must make a financial contribution of between \$2,500 and \$10,000 per project – 89 percent of which is used for project materials. AFGE's National and District offices have set aside funds to help offset this cost for any requesting locals.

To learn more about how you can get involved, visit www.afge.org/veterans and click on the link labeled "Volunteer Your Local."

Living Legend Award

For the second year, the P.O.R.T. Leadership Academy conference featured a Living Legends Awards luncheon. This year's recipient was Eric Bunn, Sr., District 14 National Vice President.



Eric Bunn Sr., District 14
National Vice President

Bunn has been a unionist for more than 35 years and currently serves on the board for the AFL-CIO Maryland State and D.C. Federation and is the treasurer of the AFL-CIO Metropolitan Washington Central Labor Council.

AFGE Celebrates Pride



AFGE was once again a proud sponsor in the 2018 Capital Pride Celebration in Washington. We were the first union in the parade, and this year, we were the only union participating in the event. Federal employees in attendance expressed appreciation for AFGE's presence at the festival as a show of support for all people's rights to live free.



**AMERICAN FEDERATION OF
GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO**

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