



September 14, 2022

Sent via e-mail

Dear Representative:

The undersigned members of the Federal-Postal Coalition, a group of more than 30 national organizations representing nearly 5 million federal and postal employees and annuitants, write in support of the bipartisan Preventing a Patronage System Act, H.R. 302, and urge you to vote in favor of it when it comes to the House floor.

The Preventing a Patronage System Act would provide a bipartisan, congressional check on abuse of executive powers from any administration. It would do so by limiting the ability of the executive branch to bypass the entire framework of the merit-based civil service through the creation of broad new exceptions to the application of merit-based rules. Specifically, the bill would prohibit the reclassification of any position in the competitive service to an excepted service schedule that was created after September 30, 2020, and limit federal employee reclassifications to the five excepted service schedules in use prior to fiscal year 2021.

A competitive, merit-based civil service provides continuity through changing administrations, preserves institutional knowledge and expertise within the federal government, and safeguards the rule of law. Civil service rules ensure federal employees are hired and fired based on their competence, or lack thereof, and not what political connections they have or lack. The rules also protect employees from being removed for choosing adherence to the Constitution, laws and professional standards over politically motivated actions or perceived allegiance to a president or political party. In so doing, the rules protect against abuse of power by the executive branch, providing greater assurance that laws passed by Congress will be faithfully executed. This system must be protected for the sake of all Americans.

In October 2020, the administration issued an Executive Order (EO) to create a new category of excepted service employees, known as Schedule F, which, if implemented, could have affected tens of thousands of non-political career federal employees, stripping them of their civil service protections and allowing them to be hired and fired at will, applying rules more akin to those covering political appointees. Unlike political appointees who conclude their tenure at the end of an administration, those hired under Schedule F could remain beyond the administration that appoints them. But if a new administration decided it wanted a new set of Schedule F employees, civil service rules would no longer stand in its way.

Our country deserves a competent civil workforce that holds the trust of the American people, and the Preventing a Patronage System Act represents an opportunity for Congress to do just that, by ensuring the civil service remains the professional and nonpartisan system that Americans have come to rely on.

For these reasons, we ask that you support H.R. 302 and vote in its favor when it is considered by the House of Representatives. Please contact the Federal-Postal Coalition Chair, John Hatton, at jhatton@narfe.org, and/or Vice-Chair, Katie Maddocks, at kmaddocks@npmhu.org.

Sincerely,

American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE)
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
American Foreign Service Association (AFSA)
FAA Managers Association (FAAMA)
Federal Managers Association (FMA)
International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF)
International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE)
Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA)
National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE)
National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA)
National Association of Assistant US Attorneys (NAAUSA)
National Association of Federal Veterinarians (NAFV)
National Council of Social Security Management Associations (NCSSMA)
National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE)
National Postal Mail Handlers Union (NPMHU)
National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU)
National Weather Service Employees Organization (NWSEO)
Patent Office Professional Association (POPA)
Professional Managers Association (PMA)
Senior Executives Association (SEA)