



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL ENGINEERS AFL-CIO & CLC

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Dear Representative,

The International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE) is a union that represents over 75,000 workers, including 25,000 civil servants. They include engineers and technicians within the Navy, Army Corps of Engineers, Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), Department of Interior and Department of Energy; scientists employed by NASA; federal Administrative Law and Immigration Judges; and Congressional Research Service (CRS) analysts, just to name a few. These workers, many who are Veterans, have decided to work for the federal government not to get rich. Rather they take pride in their opportunity to serve the taxpayers of our nation.

Unfortunately these workers have become an unwitting political football. Everyone ranging from anti-government ideologues to the recently concluded deficit commission have taken an opportunity to paint these workers as the culprit for our nation's economic woes. The most glaring example of this is the incorrect notion that federal workers are overpaid. The truth is that federal workers lag far behind their private sector counterparts. For example, just this past October the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) released data showing that federal employees are compensated an average of 24% less than workers in comparable private sector jobs.

In just the first couple of weeks of this new 112th Congress we have seen multiple bills introduced aimed directly at federal government workers. The culmination of this occurred today in the House of Representatives with the introduction of The Spending Reduction Act of 2011. This legislation essentially bundles together Republican Study Committee recommendations, 2010 GOP YouCut proposals, some of the most egregious deficit commission recommendations, and select bills already introduced in the 112th Congress. In particular, it freezes federal pay for five years, cuts the workforce by 15%, eliminates official time to deprive union officers of the ability to properly represent their members, cuts spending to FY08 levels, and calls for the elimination of Davis-Bacon prevailing wage protections for workers employed by federal government contractors.

IFPTE is obviously opposed to this bill. Many of the proposals included in it are direct attacks on both federal workers, as well as workers employed by federal contractors. IFPTE also stands in opposition to already introduced bills that are consistent with The Spending Reduction Act of 2011. These bills include HR 270, to require two week furloughs for federal workers; HR 235 to impose an additional one year federal worker pay freeze and a 10% reduction in the size of the federal workforce; and, HR 122 to eliminate official time and the efficient labor-management operations that result from it.

IFPTE believes that today's introduction of The Spending Reduction Act of 2011 is much more about scoring political points with anti-government special interests than it is about true deficit reduction. IFPTE urges you to not only refuse to co-sponsor this bill, but to also aggressively oppose it. Lastly, IFPTE urges you to oppose HR 270, HR 235 and HR 122.

Sincerely,

Gregory J. Junemann,
President