



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

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Dear Representative,

As President of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), representing upwards of 90,000 workers in the private, public and federal sectors, I am writing regarding HR 417, authored by Wyoming Congresswoman, Cynthia Lummis. This legislation would arbitrarily reduce the size of the federal workforce by 270,000. IFPTE asks that you oppose this bill.

Impulsive and drastic reductions in the federal workforce may help to scratch an ideological itch, but it will surely threaten the government services that taxpayers expect. This includes everything from the processing of Social Security claims to our national defense needs. Representative Lummis defends this bill by claiming that this reduction will not lead to the increased use of contractors. She says that, “by limiting new hires to 1 new employee for every 3 that retire,” agencies will somehow not have to hire contractors to perform the work that needs to be done. This strikes IFPTE as naïve at best, and downright misleading at worse. Is there any doubt that the DOD will turn to contractors to protect our nation when they are prevented from hiring federal workers? How about an agency like NASA, which is already 80% contracted out? The fact is that if this bill were to become law it will undoubtedly lead to inherently government services being funneled to costly contractors with little to no cost comparisons or competition.

Representative Lummis also contends that the need for a 10% across the board cut to our federal workforce is fueled by her concerns for our debt. She said that, “it is high time the federal government cut back to a workforce the American people can actually afford.” While IFPTE remains sympathetic to the need of addressing our national deficit, we believe that taking an axe to cut the size of government is irresponsible and dangerous. Simple solutions like that called for in HR 417 will result in precarious results. Instead, thoughtful analysis, judicious choices, and compromise are needed to chart a course that optimizes savings, while preserving critical programs. It would be an abdication of that Constitutional responsibility to instead rely on the irresponsible approach called for in HR 417.

Lastly, it is important to note that this legislation comes at a time when federal employees continue to surrender pay, retirement security and job security. Since 2011 our nation’s federal employees have sacrificed \$159 billion for our nation, mostly through years of pay freezes and pension cuts that went towards deficit reduction, while some was used to offset the 2012 extensions of the payroll tax cut and Unemployment Insurance (UI), as well as to help pay the bill to avoid sequestration through FY15. Government employees have also experienced furlough days and job insecurity due to the government shutdown and sequestration. Sadly HR 417 completely ignores these sacrifices.

There is no good reason to support or pass this bill. IFPTE urges you to oppose HR 417.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact IFPTE Legislative Director, Matt Biggs, at (202) 239-4880.

Sincerely,

Gregory J. Junemann,
President