



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Affiliated with the International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers, AFL-CIO

March 10, 2017

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 110,000 federal employees represented by the National Federation of Federal Employees, we strongly urge you to **VOTE NO on the Official Time Reform Act of 2017 (H.R. 1364)**. This bill passed out of committee under false pretenses through a series of serious mischaracterizations about federal Official Time use, and what H.R. 1364 will prevent and provide.

In summary, this bill targets individual federal workers (and their families) who have done nothing more than perform the lawful duties of their jobs, under the supervision of agency management. To be precise, the bill withholds service credit hours toward retirement from employees on 80% or more Official Time duty status, and it outlaws recruitment, retention and relocation funding for the same employees.

In addition—and most reprehensively—this bill **retroactively denies** employees' retirement service credit hours for time already served if they retire on or after October 1, 2017. This provision serves no purpose other than to force certain employees who are associated with unions into retirement or they risk losing months or years of retirement service credit hours for doing nothing other than their lawful duties.

The truth on H.R. 1364 and Official Time:

- Official Time is not “union time” and activities such as political and internal union business are already prohibited (e.g. the Hatch Act affords no exceptions for unions).
- Official Time is a function of management, and it is supervised by managers in accordance with any limitations imposed by the agency.
- Official Time is used for workplace endeavors including issues regarding safety, efficiency, effectiveness, employee engagement, and support to management to implement initiatives.
- Official Time is used to advise and represent federal employees on personnel matters often saving the agency time and money by avoiding costly litigation.
- This bill cannot stand on its own merits which is why its supporters needed to fabricate problems with Official Time and then offer false solutions meant to punish federal workers and their families.

H.R. 1364 is below the dignity of the Congress. It depicts a beneficial workforce practice as illegitimate and it goes on to target the financial security of individual federal employees for their lawful service. At a time when the checks and balances of the government are arguably deteriorating, H.R. 1364 will depress the use of Official Time, a valuable management tool that encourages transparency and accountability in government.

Again, I ask you to **vote NO on H.R. 1364**, the Official Time Reform Act of 2017.

Sincerely,

Randy Erwin
National President