

**International
Association of
Machinists and
Aerospace Workers**



9000 Machinists Place
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772-2687

Area Code 301
967-4500



OFFICE OF THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

August 8, 2018

Dear Governor Abbott,

We are writing to express our serious concerns regarding the impact of the planned layoff of approximately 98 federal employees and 207 civilian defense contractors on or about August 31, 2018 at the Red River Army Depot (RRAD) in Texarkana, Texas. The announcement of this second round of layoffs comes less than three months after a previous round of layoffs in May where approximately 600 RRAD workers lost their jobs. If this second round of layoffs is allowed to proceed, more than 900 federal and civilian defense contract workers at RRAD will have lost their livelihood in the span of just four months. The impact on these workers, their families, and the surrounding region will be immense.

The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) represents the civilian defense contractors at RRAD, and its affiliate, the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE) represents the federal employees. Both classifications of workers stand alongside each other to provide critical support of our military forces at home and abroad. Now, these workers need our help.

In February 2018, RRAD command announced a reduction in workload based on the FY 18-19 Budget Estimate Submission, decreasing direct labor hours by 1.3 million in FY 18. As a result, a reduction in manpower is underway that forced the layoff of nearly 600 RRAD workers in May and will likely force the layoff of another approximately 300 workers in late August. With the continuing loss of direct labor hours expected to increase into FY 19, further layoffs are a serious possibility in the coming year.

RRAD is the main economic driver for the Texarkana area with a direct impact on communities in Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas. A recent economic impact study completed by the University of Arkansas found that the May 2018 layoffs alone, totaling 585 RRAD jobs, would slash the region's economic output by \$255 million and result in the loss of more than 400 indirect and induced jobs in the surrounding community. Given the importance of RRAD to the region, it should be unacceptable to sustain this loss of workload and the subsequent damage to the economy without an ardent effort to demand the transfer of work back to this depot.

Due to the outstanding capabilities of this facility and its highly-skilled workforce, the Army has designated RRAD as a Center of Industrial and Technical Excellence (CITE) for Tactical Wheeled Vehicles, Small Emplacement Excavator, Bradley Fighting Vehicle Series, Multiple Launch Rocket System chassis, Patriot Missile Re-certifications, and for Rubber products necessary for sustainment and support to the United States and Allied forces and Agencies. Additionally, RRAD provides all four military branches with vehicle Mine-Resistant Ambush Protection (MRAP) and hosts the only Rubber Products division of its kind. With this scope and level of capabilities it would be an absolute travesty to disassemble this highly-skilled workforce due to a short-term lull in workload.

We respectfully request your assistance in demanding that all pertinent decision makers take immediate action to protect workload and provide RRAD command with the necessary approval and authority to avert these needless and harmful layoffs.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Robert Martinez, Jr.
International President, IAMAW



Randy L. Erwin, National President
National Federation of Federal Employees, IAMAW, AFL-CIO