



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Affiliated with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers



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Trump, in State of the Union, Seeks New Workforce Management Authority that Already Exists

Washington, D.C. – Today, the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE) speaks out against comments made by President Trump during his State of the Union speech delivered in Congress last night. During his speech, President Trump called upon Congress to give Cabinet secretaries the ability to reward good workers and remove federal employees who ‘undermine the public trust,’ without mentioning that these authorities already exist under the law.

“Current law and regulations that govern the federal workforce allow for ample options to reward good performers and discipline or remove employees for poor performance and misconduct,” stated Randy Erwin, NFFE national president. “On average, several thousand employees are removed from service every year and tens of thousands are disciplined for performance or misconduct. The law itself is not the problem, and this is proven each year through thousands of successful adverse personnel actions by managers who are properly trained.”

President Trump cited the 2017 VA Accountability Act as a model for other executive branch departments, however, critics of the law say it is less about accountability and more about politicizing the federal workforce.

“The VA Accountability Act does nothing more than destroy systematic protections against political coercion by legalizing baseless adverse actions against employees which, in turn, creates a culture of fear,” Erwin continued. “This kind of fear silences whistleblowers, hampers recruiting and retention efforts, and discourages innovation to challenge the status quo.”

“There are no winners under the VA Accountability Act,” Erwin concluded. “Not the Department of Veterans Affairs, not the VA workforce, and definitely not our nation’s veterans. The only possible winners are those who want to weaken the VA to privatize it and put a profit on the head of each veteran. Using this as a model for governmentwide reform is a very bad idea.”