



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Affiliated with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers



NFFE News Release

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FEDERAL EMPLOYEES UNION PRAISES WHITE HOUSE EXECUTIVE ORDER ESTABLISHING LABOR-MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIPS

Washington, D.C. – This morning President Barack Obama signed an Executive Order (E.O.) establishing labor-management forums, an action that will improve the delivery of government services by tapping into the knowledge and expertise that exists within the federal workforce. By establishing an environment where federal workers have an opportunity to be heard, the best ideas on how to make government run better can be brought forward and considered by federal agencies.

A top priority for federal employee unions, the signing of the E.O. could mark the end of an extended period of poor labor-relations at many federal agencies. A similar labor-management partnership existed under the Clinton Administration, but President George W. Bush abolished the partnerships as one of his first acts in office, an action that soured labor-management rapport from the very start of his administration.

“We are very pleased to see the Obama Administration take meaningful strides to engage the federal workforce,” said William R. Dougan, national president of the National Federation of Federal Employees. “Federal employees care deeply about the service they provide to the American people, but for almost a decade they have lacked an avenue to contribute ways to make the agencies they work for more efficient and effective. Going forward, federal workers will have the ability to contribute their ideas, and the American people will benefit because of it.”

The E.O. represents a clear step in the right direction, but federal employee unions did not get everything they desired in the E.O. Federal unions have been lobbying the Administration hard for mandatory bargaining rights on all permissive subjects. While the E.O. does not prevent agencies from bargaining permissive subjects if they choose to do so, as written, the E.O. gives agencies the ability to opt out of bargaining permissive subjects with employee unions. The Administration has committed to testing mandatory bargaining on permissive subject at some federal agencies through a pilot program, the details of which are not spelled out in the E.O.

“Mandatory bargaining on permissive subjects would have been the homerun ball for us, but we didn’t get that,” said Dougan. “Nonetheless, we are still in a much better place today than we have been for the last nine years. We consider this executive order a good starting point as we move into a much anticipated era of labor-management cooperation in the federal government. We look forward to rolling up our sleeves and working together to tackle the many important issues before us which impact the federal workforce.”

Link to White House Press Statement: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/executive-order-creating-labor-management-forums-improve-delivery-government-servic>

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Established in 1917, the National Federation of Federal Employees is the oldest union representing civil service federal employees. NFFE represents 100,000 federal employees government-wide. NFFE is affiliated with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers. For more information, go to www.nffe.org.