

Mitchell U.C.
7-17-18
H.R. 559



AMERICANS for TAX REFORM

July 16, 2018

Dear Members of Congress,

I am writing in support of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee's amendment to H.R. 559, the Modern Employment Reform, Improvement, and Transformation (MERIT) Act (originally introduced by Representative Loudermilk). This amendment would reform the federal government's dismissal process and strengthen the federal workforce.

Today, there are about 2.1 million federal government workers. U.S. taxpayer dollars should be spent wisely on excellent government employees. Unfortunately, there are some poor performers in the federal government (see e.g. the Phoenix VA hospital scandal) compounded by the fact that it takes about a year and a half to fire a poor performing employee.

The Committee's amendment seeks to address this problem. The amendment first improves the federal workforce by changing the process for removing and suspending poor performers. Senior executives could be removed as well, rather than just demoted. In addition, appeals based on short-term furloughs and emergency furloughs to the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board would be prohibited. Agencies also wouldn't have as many procedures to go through when taking furlough actions.

Further, the amendment seeks to ensure that employees who commit felonies while performing official duties are not rewarded by eliminating the period of service when the felonies were committed for annuity computation. Agencies could also order repayment of bonuses and awards if poor conduct affecting the reward is discovered. Finally, the amendment ensures that new employees are good employees by lengthening the probationary period for competitive service appointments and SES members from one year to two years.

Americans for Tax Reform strongly supports this amendment because it improves the federal workforce, encouraging a more efficient and effective federal government.

Sincerely,

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