



September 17, 2024

The Honorable James Comer
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and
Accountability
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jamie Raskin
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and
Accountability
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Comer and Ranking Member Raskin:

On behalf of the over 150,000 federal employees represented by the National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU), I write to share our views on two bills being considered by the Committee.

First, NTEU opposes H.R. 9594, the Protecting Taxpayers' Wallets Act, which would charge federal labor organizations for their use of agency resources, including office space and equipment, as well as any official time. The main purpose of the bill is to undermine federal employee unions.

The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 states that experience in both private and public employment indicates that the statutory protection of the right of employees to organize, bargain collectively, and participate through labor organizations of their own choosing in decisions which affect them safeguards the public interest and contributes to the effective conduct of public business. Granting certain unionized federal employees official time simply gives them the ability to perform certain activities that are in the joint interest of both the union and the agency during work hours. Official time is essential for ensuring unions can continue to assist federal employees with workplace issues such as retaliation, discrimination, and sexual harassment. In the 1978 Act, Congress expressly stated that official time could be used for negotiating collective bargaining agreements and handling employee grievances and training but could NOT be used for conducting internal union matters, organizing workers, soliciting members or conducting partisan political activity. The agency must approve the time, and it must be "reasonable, necessary, and in the public interest."

Unlike many private sector unions, federal labor unions must represent the interests of all employees in the union it represents without regard to membership. In other words, the union must represent each and every employee, yet each and every employee may choose whether or not to join and pay dues. It is completely voluntary on the employee's part. The law does not

allow “agency shop” arrangements in the federal sector, nor does it allow unions to charge “fair share” fees for services it provides to non-dues paying employees. Official time makes this arrangement work for the federal government.

Furthermore, the use of agency resources such as office space and equipment is negotiated between the union and the agency and it is in the interest of both parties to allow unions to use these resources. Providing office space and equipment allows for the protection of sensitive personnel information when discussed in union offices and when stored on government servers.

As such, NTEU strongly opposes this bill and urges the Committee to vote in opposition as well.

NTEU also has concerns with H.R. 9593, the Manager Attitudes and Notions According to Government Employee Responses (MANAGER) Act. While we appreciate the value in surveying federal managers, the bill as drafted is biased in its approach to the survey. It only seeks information about taking actions related to employee performance without considering other aspects of being a manager. Moreover, providing those taking the survey an opportunity to provide a narrative response risks the anonymity of the manager and the employees he or she manages. We therefore recommend significant changes to the bill to address these concerns.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,



Doreen P. Greenwald
National President