



September 6, 2019

The Honorable James Inhofe
Chairman
Senate Committee on Armed Services
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Armed Services
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Adam Smith
Chairman
House Committee on Armed Services
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mac Thornberry
Ranking Member
House Committee on Armed Services
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Support for the Family Leave Provisions in the FY20 NDAA

Dear Chairman Inhofe, Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Reed and Ranking Member Thornberry:

On behalf of the more than four million active and retired federal employees represented through the undersigned member organizations of the Federal-Postal Coalition, we write to express our support for sections 1121 through 1126 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2020 (H.R. 2500). These provisions include the language of the Federal Employee Paid Leave Act (H.R. 1534, S. 1174), which grants 12 weeks of paid parental leave in connection with the birth, adoption or foster placement of a new child; allows for up to 12 weeks of paid family leave to care for an immediate family member with a serious medical condition; provides employees with 12 weeks of paid leave if they are unable to work due to a serious medical condition; and provides up to 12 weeks of paid leave for other purposes that qualify for unpaid leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), including for certain military, caregiving and leave purposes. We respectfully request these provisions be included in any conference report on the NDAA.

Paid family leave for government employees will benefit the government, the nation and the workforce. The policy will ensure that the Federal Government remains competitive in hiring and allows employees to care for themselves and their loved ones without sacrificing financial security. The policy also will advance national security through the recruitment and retention of capable professionals in our civilian DOD workforce, an important consideration in competing with the private sector for top talent.

Other federal agencies will benefit as well, through the improvement of their capacity to recruit and retain younger talent, with younger workers increasingly becoming a larger portion of the overall federal workforce. Data reveal that federally employed women of childbearing age

are more likely to quit federal employment than men of the same age. Studies also have shown that when workers have access to paid leave, their turnover declines and their loyalty to their employer increases. Prior increases in federal worker satisfaction with family friendly policies have reduced turnover intention by 37.5 percent. The inclusion of the House family leave provisions in the final NDAA will likely generate similar results in the federal workforce now and in the future.

Finally, the inclusion of the family leave provisions in the NDAA will have modest budgetary consequences. Providing paid leave for federal employees will save the government at least \$50 million annually in turnover and replacement costs, according to a 2019 study by the Institute for Women's Policy. Furthermore, the pay-for provisions of the NDAA will help to ensure that this proposal does not contribute to the budget deficit.

We appreciate your leadership and ask that the final conference report include section 1121 through 1126 of the House version of the NDAA. Thank you for your consideration of these comments. Should you have any questions or to discuss further, please contact FPC co-chairs John Hatton (jhatton@narfe.org) or Kori Blalock Keller (kbkeller@nalc.org).

Sincerely yours,

American Federation of Government Employees
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees
American Foreign Service Association
American Postal Workers Union
FAA Managers Association
Federal Managers Association
International Association of Fire Fighters
International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers
National Air Traffic Controllers Association
National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association
National Association of Assistant United States Attorneys
National Association of Letter Carriers
National Association of Postal Supervisors
National Council of Social Security Management Associations
National Federation of Federal Employees
National Treasury Employees Union
National Weather Service Employees Organization
Patent Office Professional Association
Professional Aviation System Specialists
Professional Managers Association
Senior Executives Association