

Congressman Dave Reichert (WA-08)

Testimony before the Subcommittee on the Federal Workforce, U.S. Postal Service and Census

June 26, 2013

Chairman Farenthold, Ranking Member Lynch, it's an honor to testify in front of your Subcommittee today on a subject that is very close to my heart – the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC).

As a Member of Congress, I can tell you that many of the programs our government runs do not work. As a former chair of the King County Employee Charitable Campaign (KCECC) in Washington, which is County's version of the CFC, I can tell you that the Combined Federal Campaign is one of the programs that we got right. That is why I have continued to participate as a Member of Congress.

So first, I'd like to share my history with the CFC and then I'd like to share why I'm concerned about OPM's proposed changes.

The CFC has given me the opportunity to donate to causes like the Special Olympics and the Pediatric Interim Care Center or PICC in my home state of Washington. PICC is the place where two of my grandchildren were cared for as infants. When I am in Washington, this twenty-four hour center for drug-exposed infants has become a frequent stop.

As the former Chair of the King County, Washington employees' campaign, I saw first-hand the benefits that the CFC, and its current structure of local control and support, had on our community. I also know what it takes to found a non-profit and have it approved to be a part of the CFC. In 1982, I experienced the worst fear of every law enforcement officer, my partner Sergeant Samuel Hicks was shot and killed by a murder suspect. As the search went on to find his killer, it quickly became apparent that something needed to be done to support Sam's family during this time of need. In his honor, I founded the Sam Hicks Emergency Relief Interim First Fund, or SHERIFF, to provide for the families of fallen officers. I am proud to say that SHERIFF became eligible for the CFC.

Why I am here today, and what concerns me, is that the Office of Personnel Management has proposed wholesale changes to the regulations governing the Combined Federal Campaign. While they say that these changes are based on a report produced by the CFC-50 Commission, most of the proposed changes were never discussed in the hearings leading up to the report or even mentioned in the report's final text.

The two proposed regulations that concern me the most are:

- OPM's plans to replace a local, volunteer campaign structure with a centralized, Washington, D.C. campaign. The new structure would be managed centrally by OPM. I certainly agree with the recommendations made by the CFC 50/50 Commission that the number of campaigns needs to be reduced by encouraging mergers, and I understand this is already happening voluntarily all across the country under existing rules. However, OPM now proposes Regional Coordinating Committees to administer local campaigns. The volunteer Local Federal Coordinating Committees that have successfully conducted the campaigns for decades will be eliminated. OPM would have exclusive control in establishing each region. I believe that removing local control over campaign

administration will alienate donors in smaller communities by making them think that they're just giving their hard-earned dollars away to the bureaucracy in Washington, D.C.

- OPM further proposes to eliminate local operation of the campaigns. Currently this is done locally through contracts to organizations known as Principal Combined Fund Organizations. Essentially these are local non-profit organizations that oversee day to day campaign operations. OPM proposes to establish "Central Campaign Administrators" (CCA's) that would again fall under the exclusive supervision of OPM. This seems impractical and unwise and will only add to the federal work force and bureaucratize a campaign dependent upon the enthusiasm of local federal agencies and staff.

I would also note that I am concerned about the proposed non-refundable charity application fee. This could have the unintended consequence of causing smaller, more local charities to leave the CFC.

In my experience, these changes taking away local control and operation would take away the attributes that make the CFC so successful – the fact that local people know that they are giving to a locally administered campaign, benefitting local charities, helping local people. Ultimately, my concern is that these changes could ultimately result in fewer CFC participants and donations. In these times of need, these charities cannot afford fewer donations.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to be here today.

Biography

Congressman Dave Reichert brings over 40 years of public service experience to Washington. Reichert is serving his fifth term as the Representative from the Eighth Congressional District of Washington.

Reichert has a remarkable record of service. Decisive leadership, integrity and tireless dedication are his hallmarks. From 1971 through 1976, Reichert was a member of the U.S. Air Force Reserve. In 1972 Reichert joined the King County Sheriff's Office and in 1997 he became the first elected sheriff in 30 years. Under his leadership, the county saw a significant drop in violent crime. Reichert brought national recognition to the Sheriff's Office as head of the Green River Task Force solving the largest serial murder case in U.S. history. As Sheriff, Reichert also brought an unprecedented \$28 million in federal funding to King County law enforcement efforts.

Sheriff Reichert established himself as a leading voice against domestic violence and an advocate of strong family values. In 2004 Reichert received the prestigious National Sheriffs' Association's "Sheriff of the Year" award. He is a two-time Medal of Valor Award recipient from the King County Sheriff's Office and was honored with Washington Policy Center's Champion of Freedom Award. Reichert received the Families Northwest Public Policy Award and took top honors in a local television network's (King 5) leadership poll.

Reichert served as president of the Washington State Sheriffs' Association and an executive board member of the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs. He has served on numerous advisory boards including the King County Criminal Justice Council and the King County Domestic Violence Council. Reichert co-chaired the Washington State Partners in Crisis, a statewide coalition targeting issues related to mental health. Reichert also was a leader in the fight against Meth in Washington State by implementing annual Statewide Conferences, State Meth Action Teams, and was co-chair of the KC Meth Coalition. As Sheriff, he was also a member of the KC Committee to End Homelessness. He currently serves as a member of the Special Olympics of Washington State Board of Directors.

Dave Reichert was born in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, in 1950, the oldest of seven children and grandson of the town marshal. His family moved to Washington State in 1951, living first in Renton and later in Kent, where Reichert attended Kent Meridian High School. He graduated with an A.A. degree from Concordia Lutheran College in Portland, Oregon, where he played football and met his wife of 42 years, Julie. The Reicherts currently live in Auburn and have three grown children, Angela, Tabitha and Daniel, and six grandchildren.