

AFL-CIO

LEGISLATIVE ALERT

September 14, 2017

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the AFL-CIO, I strongly urge you to oppose the "Johnson Amendment, #878, to the FY 2018 National Defense Authorization Act. This Amendment would impose a penalty of reduced pension accrual on those who agree to serve as employee representatives.

Employees do not use official time for union business. Current law prohibits it--and employee unions adhere scrupulously to that law. Federal employees conduct official agency business while on official time. The use of official time is a longstanding, necessary tool that gives agencies and their employees the means to expeditiously and effectively use employee input to address mission-related challenges. It also helps to bring swift closure to conflicts that arise in all workplaces. The law limits official time to that which the union and the agency both agree is reasonable, necessary, and in the public interest. Therefore, agency officials are able to oversee the use, management, and scheduling of official time based on the immediate needs of the workplace. This legislation proposes to cut federal employees' retirement by taking away creditable service for any time spent conducting official representational duties in excess of that cap.

In addition, we oppose the McCain-Reed Amendment #498 that would authorize another Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC). In this age of military uncertainty, it is not the time to authorize a new BRAC round. A new round of BRAC would incur significant upfront costs at a time of significant fiscal restraint under the Budget Control Act. Previous BRAC rounds have not always resulted in the initially projected longer-term savings. To the extent that savings were realized, the impact frequently occurred much later than anticipated and the amount was lower than promised when bases were closed. A precipitous BRAC action at this time would have serious consequences and the toll on military readiness is not worth the risk.

Thank you for your attention to these important matters

Sincerely,



William Samuel, Director
Government Affairs Department

WS/BC/lkr

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations

815 16th St., N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20006 • 202-637-5000 • www.aflcio.org

RICHARD L. TRUMKA
PRESIDENT

ELIZABETH H. SHULER
SECRETARY-TREASURER

TEFERE GEBRE
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT