



## LEGISLATIVE ALERT

October 23, 2025

Dear Senator:

As we enter the fourth week of the federal government shutdown, with a healthcare crisis about to accelerate come November 1, the AFL-CIO urges you to support Senator Van Hollen's True Shutdown Fairness Act to provide immediate backpay and continued pay to all the impacted federal workers, federal contractors, and military personnel while the shutdown persists. Likewise, we urge support for Senator Peters' Military and Federal Employees Protection Act, which would also provide an immediate backpay installment to all such workers.

These workers — military, civilian, and private sector alike — serve the American people day in and day out in myriad ways. This shutdown has put some of them out of work and all of them out of pay, through no fault of their own. Many federal workers, along with the military, have been required to perform their duties without pay. Other federal workers and contractors want to work but have been furloughed and locked out from their jobs. While the paychecks have stopped, the bills have not. Rent needs to be paid. Mortgage payments are due. Groceries must be bought. Sadly, their financial pain is being used as political leverage. The Trump Administration has been exacerbating their hardship and anxiety, announcing unlawful, permanent reductions-in-force while blaming a temporary shutdown and threatening to deny federal workers backpay in violation of the Government Employee Fair Treatment Act (GEFTA).

Workers and their families should not be used as pawns. The Van Hollen bill would put an end to the gameplaying with workers' financial security. It would ensure that federal workers, both excepted and furloughed, federal contractors, and military personnel are paid during this shutdown. It would provide them with immediate backpay and undo the permanent layoffs that the Trump Administration has pursued for political leverage. And the Peters bill would provide immediate relief to impacted workers as well.

The Senate is expected to vote on S.3012 as soon as today. If that bill can be amended, we urge you to amend it with the provisions in the Van Hollen and Peters bills. S.3012 would provide pay to some impacted workers, but it fails to pay everyone. Among federal workers, for example, it only pays those whom the Trump Administration has deemed "excepted" and forced to work without pay. Those workers need to be paid, and so does everyone else who is impacted. Hundreds of thousands of furloughed workers would be denied a lifeline under S.3012 unless it is amended. Importantly, the Trump Administration does not appear to be following any consistent rules regarding who is excepted or furloughed, and those arbitrary determinations could be altered as the shutdown continues. Without amendment, given the Administration's approach to this shutdown thus far, S.3012 would hand the Administration the ability to decide whom it pays or does not pay. The President could decide to suddenly cut a segment of workers off from their paychecks. This problem can be avoided by adopting the Van Hollen bill's approach.

Please support the Van Hollen bill, the Peters bill, and amendments that would ensure immediate backpay and ongoing pay for all impacted workers and prohibit RIFs during the shutdown.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jody Calemine". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jody" being more prominent and the last name "Calemine" following in a similar style.

Jody Calemine  
Director, Government Affairs