



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS

HAROLD A. SCHAITBERGER
General President

THOMAS H. MILLER
General Secretary-Treasurer

January 31, 2011

House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

I write to express my grave concern over the increasingly strident rhetoric attacking our nation's dedicated civil service employees.

Federal employees make numerous sacrifices in their careers and their personal lives for the benefit of our nation. They work diligently with honor and commitment to support the war on terror, serving on the front lines in supporting all that this nation stands for. They serve in Iraq and Afghanistan. They serve on our nation's borders and in the streets of our cities protecting us from harm and providing essential services to the public.

Contrary to the public perception, federal employees are paid much less than their counterparts in the private sector, yet perform at a much higher level. Nevertheless, many pundits have chosen to demonize these patriotic public servants.

Therefore, I am asking that as a public servant yourself, you oppose the draconian measures coming before you that unfairly target federal employees.

Already in the 112th Congress we have seen several bills introduced attacking federal government workers, including HR 408, the Spending Reduction Act of 2011. This legislative package groups together Study Committee recommendations, 2010 You Cut proposals, and the harshest deficit commission recommendations. It freezes federal pay for five years, cuts the workforce by 15%, eliminates Official Time to deprive union officers of the ability to properly represent workers, and calls for the elimination of Davis-Bacon prevailing wage protections.

The IAFF strongly opposes this attack on federal workers, including the federal fire fighters that the IAFF represents. The IAFF also opposes other bills that unfairly target federal workers, including HR 270, which requires two week unpaid furloughs; HR 235, which imposes an additional one year federal worker pay freeze and a 10% reduction in the size of the federal workforce; and, HR 122 that proposes to eliminate official time and the efficient labor-management operations that result from it.

The IAFF understands the need to consider viable deficit reductions, and supports responsible efforts to rein in spending. But targeting the federal workforce and in particular employee rights to engage in union representation is more about political posturing by anti-government, anti-worker special interests than it is about deficit reduction. The IAFF urges you to oppose HR 408, the Spending Reduction Act of 2011, as well as HR 270, HR 235 and HR 122.

Thank you for your consideration and your support of the nation's front line domestic defenders.

Sincerely,

Harold A. Schaitberger
General President