

NATIONAL SECURITY PERSONNEL SYSTEM

The IAFF urges Congress to protect the civil service rights of Federal fire fighters.

BACKGROUND

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004 authorized the Secretary of Defense to create a new personnel system for Department of Defense (DoD) civilian employees. DoD responded by creating the National Security Personnel System (NSPS), which swept aside decades of important labor protections that Congress had enacted. NSPS undermined collective bargaining and appeal rights for DoD workers, including DoD fire fighters, and allowed managers to institute arbitrary pay schemes.

In response, the IAFF joined with a coalition of labor organizations representing DoD civilian employees to repeal and block implementation of NSPS. Working together with 36 other unions under the umbrella of the United DoD Workers Coalition (UDWC), the IAFF attacked NSPS both legislatively and in the courts. First, courts delayed implementation of NSPS, and then Congress agreed to repeal it entirely in the FY 2010 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 2647) signed into law by President Obama on October 28, 2009.

Although the law repealed NSPS, it also allowed DoD to attempt to design a new system of hiring, assignment, and performance evaluation. Meanwhile, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is considering government-wide changes to personnel policies, some of which may mimic NSPS.

CONGRESSIONAL ACTION

The IAFF is closely monitoring any development of new personnel policies by DoD and OPM to ensure that the rights of federal fire fighters and all federal employees are protected.