

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 19, 2018

President Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump:

We write to express our serious concerns about recent actions to undermine the foundations of our civil service system. We respectfully request that you reconsider and rescind Executive Orders 13836, 13837, and 13839, which undermine the lawful rights and protections afforded to federal employees. At a minimum, we hope you will ensure that managers at federal agencies do not use these executive orders inappropriately to circumvent existing collective bargaining agreements between agencies and federal workers.

The approximately two million men and women in the federal civil service are dedicated and hardworking professionals. They safeguard our national security and food safety, perform lifesaving medical procedures, deliver Social Security and veterans' benefits, and fulfill countless other responsibilities on behalf of our citizens.

The recent executive orders undermine the decades-old rights of federal employees to fair representation in the workplace. These orders significantly reduce the extent to which federal agencies will negotiate collective bargaining agreements with their workforce. Instead, federal agencies or outside panels will impose workplace policies without good faith negotiation.

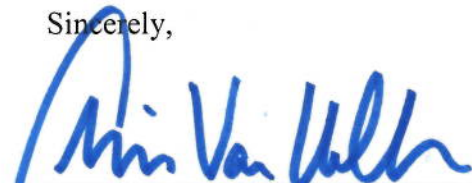
Imposing arbitrary limits on the time that federal employees can carry out statutory duties to represent fellow employees – known as official time – makes it harder to resolve workplace disputes and root out waste, fraud, and abuse. The law already requires federal agencies and unions to negotiate agreements that require official time to be “reasonable, necessary, and in the public interest” (5 U.S.C. § 7131) and official time has helped prevent cover-ups of disease outbreaks, address racial harassment, and expedite benefits for veterans.

We support improving the performance of the federal workforce, but these executive orders will do the opposite. These executive orders discourage federal agencies from using their discretion to create reasonable plans for federal employees to improve their performance if they are at risk of demotion or termination. Firing employees without due process undermines the merit-based civil service system, and opens the door for managers to satisfy their own personal vendettas or political agendas.

Some federal agencies already appear to be abrogating existing collective bargaining agreements by citing these executive orders. We ask that you direct agency and department heads to cease and desist from doing so.

It is time to stop the attacks on our federal workers. These are also attacks on our veterans, who make up roughly one-third of the federal civilian workforce. We need to keep politics out of the civil service, and we urge you to reconsider these executive orders.

Sincerely,



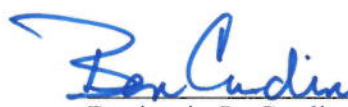
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



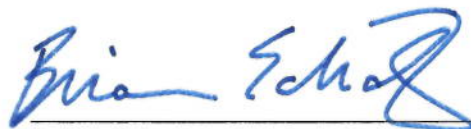
Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Brian Schatz
United States Senator



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



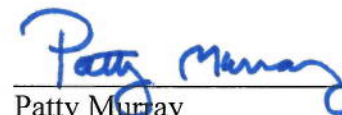
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



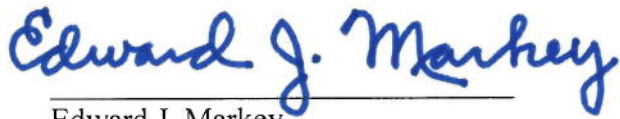
Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



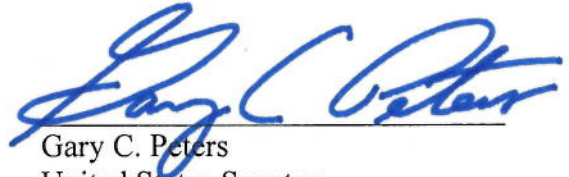
Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



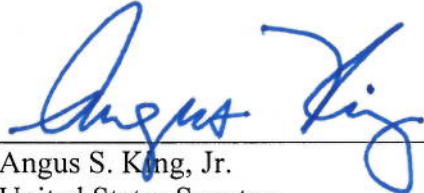
Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



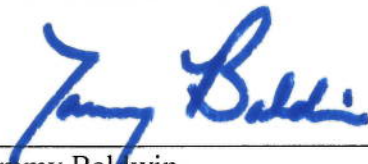
Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



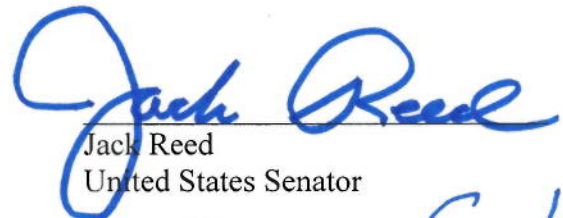
Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



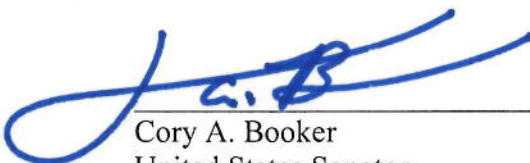
Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



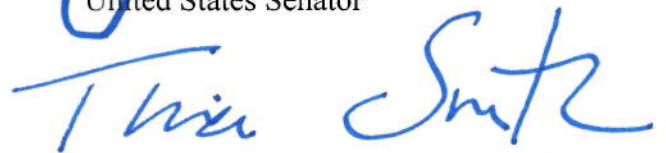
Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



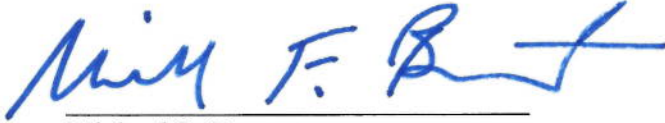
Tina Smith
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



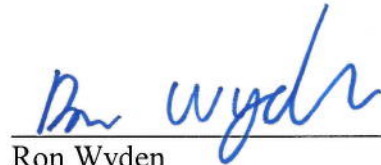
Tom Udall
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



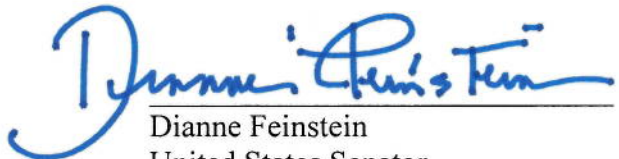
Joe Donnelly
United States Senator



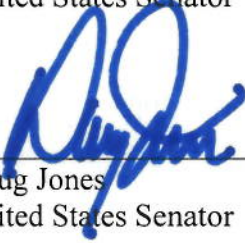
Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Doug Jones
United States Senator



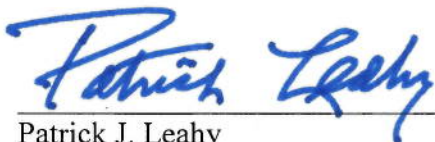
Bill Nelson
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Patrick J. Leahy
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Murphy', is positioned at the top left of the page. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator