

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 31, 2007

The Honorable Ike Skelton
Chairman
House Armed Services Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Duncan Hunter
Ranking Member
House Armed Services Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Skelton and Congressman Hunter:

As the Committee considers the Conference Report on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2008 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 1585), we request your support for inclusion of language that will fix the misguided and dysfunctional National Security Personnel System (NSPS).

NSPS has been a bad deal for taxpayers and for the Department of Defense's (DOD) civilian workers. We have heard from our constituents and other DOD civilian workers across the country that the system is taking its toll on the morale of this loyal workforce.

In 2003, Congress gave then-Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld broad authority to modify pay and personnel practices at DOD. Department leadership subsequently went far beyond the authority granted by Congress and created an NSPS that is not only contrary to law, but also needlessly eviscerates the rights of the DOD workforce. Despite several Congressional hearings in which lawmakers warned DOD against creating an NSPS that pushed the letter of the law and was not consistent with preserving workers rights (including Veterans Preference in Reduction In Force situations), DOD nonetheless proceeded to implement NSPS unilaterally. As a result, the personnel system continues to be the target of legal challenges and is not supported by the overwhelming majority of the more than 700,000 civilian workers at DOD.

NSPS is proving more costly to taxpayers than DOD estimated. In fact, a July 16, 2007, report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO-07-851) found that "DOD's November 2005 estimate that it will cost \$158 million to implement NSPS between 2005 and 2008 does not include the full cost the department expects to incur as a result of implementing the new system."

Both the House-passed FY2008 Defense Authorization bill and, to a lesser extent, the Senate-passed version, contain important provisions to repeal the most damaging aspects of NSPS. These provisions, if adopted in the conference report, will restore collective bargaining rights, an appropriate performance appraisal system and access to an appeals process – all long-standing protections designed to promote a professional and vibrant civil service. Enactment of these provisions will ensure that DOD resources are more properly devoted to the warfighters in the field, and not toward a misguided reinvention of the DOD civilian workforce.

Specifically, we ask that you include the following language in the final Conference Report:

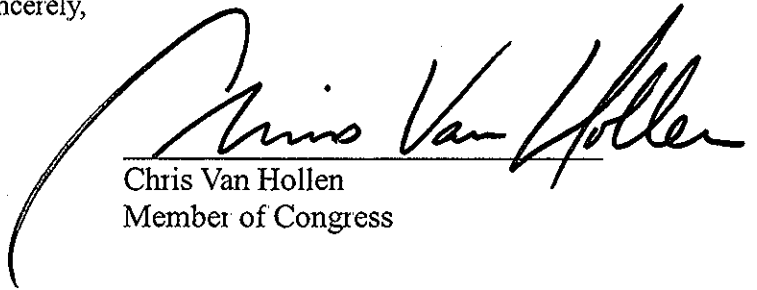
- The House-passed NSPS repeal language in its entirety;
- The Senate-passed NSPS repeal language for wage-grade workers; and
- House- and Senate-passed language continuing the exemption of DOD labs from the NSPS.

We thank you in advance for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



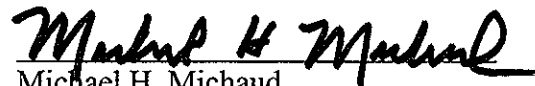
Thomas H. Allen
Member of Congress



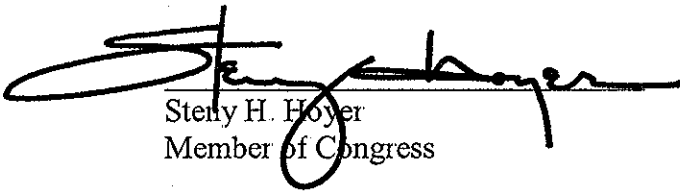
Chris Van Hollen
Member of Congress



Jay Bybee
Member of Congress



Michael H. Michaud
Member of Congress



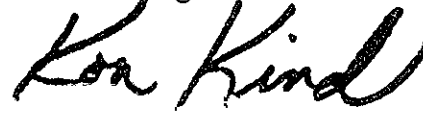
Steny H. Hoyer
Member of Congress



David Loebsack
Member of Congress



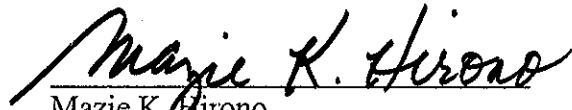
Carol Shea-Porter
Member of Congress



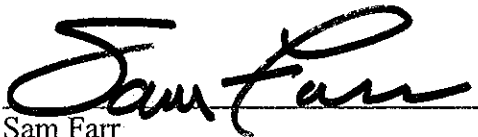
Ron Kind
Member of Congress



Gwen Moore
Member of Congress



Mazie K. Hirono
Member of Congress



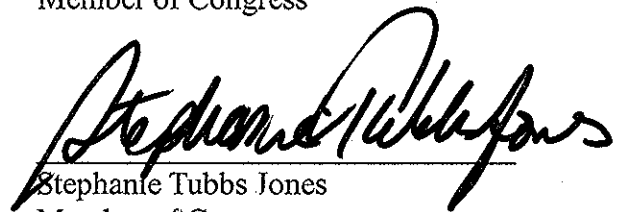
Sam Farr
Member of Congress



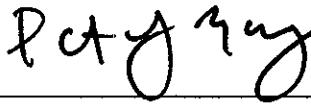
Phil Hare
Member of Congress



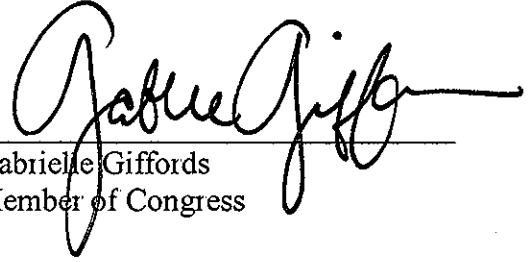
Jim McDermott
Member of Congress



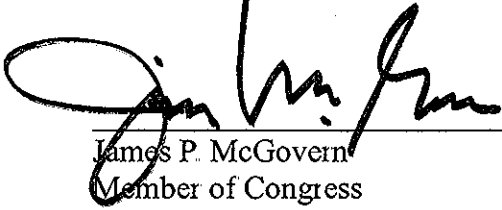
Stephanie Tubbs Jones
Member of Congress



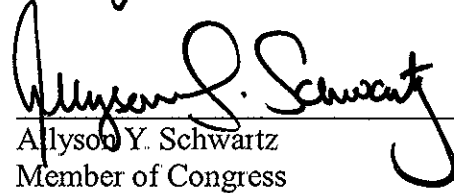
Patrick J. Murphy
Member of Congress



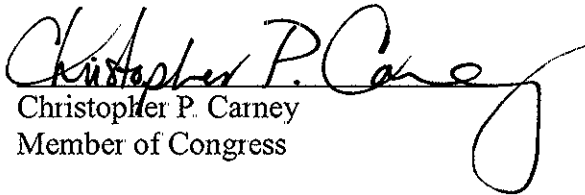
Gabrielle Giffords
Member of Congress



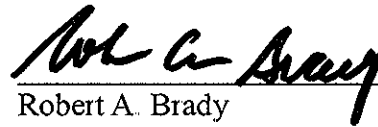
James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Alyson Y. Schwartz
Member of Congress



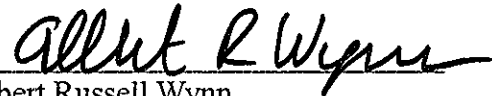
Christopher P. Carney
Member of Congress



Robert A. Brady
Member of Congress



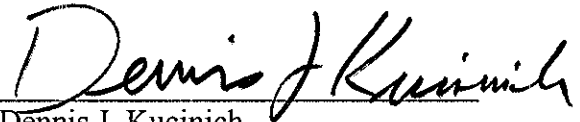
Charles W. Dent
Member of Congress



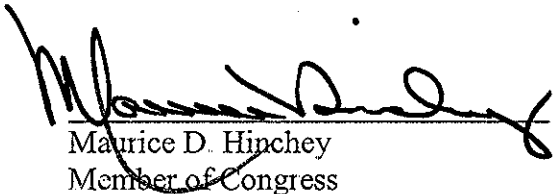
Albert Russell Wynn
Member of Congress



Norman D. Dicks
Member of Congress



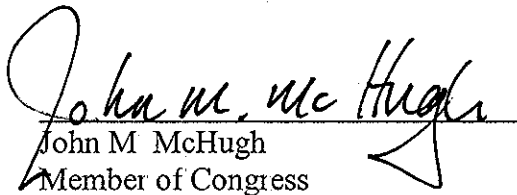
Dennis J. Kucinich
Member of Congress



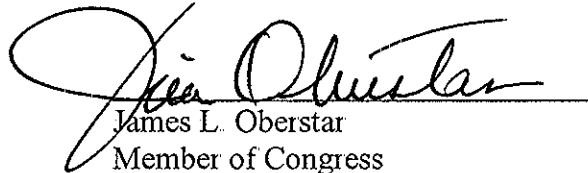
Maurice D. Hinchey
Member of Congress




Tim Holden
Member of Congress




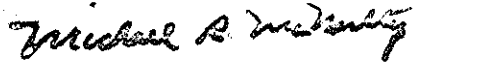
John M. McHugh
Member of Congress

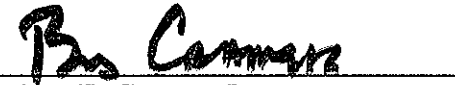


James L. Oberstar
Member of Congress

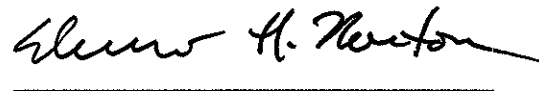

Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress

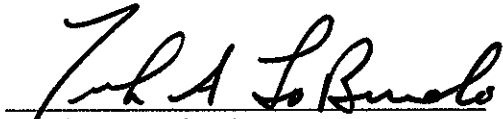

James P. Moran
Member of Congress


Michael R. McNulty
Member of Congress


Robert E. Cramer, Jr.
Member of Congress

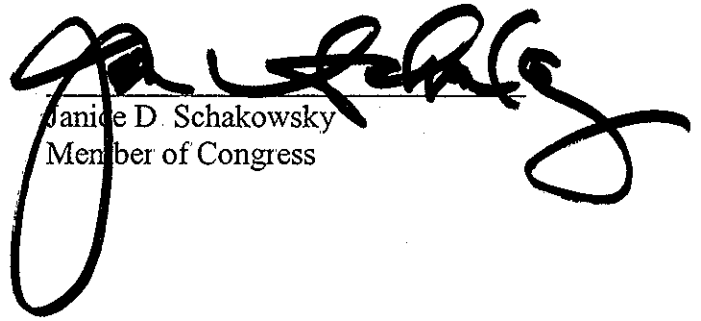

Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress


Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress


Frank A. LoBiondo
Member of Congress

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Paul E. Kanjorski
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janice D. Schakowsky". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Janice D. Schakowsky
Member of Congress