Congress of the United States Washington, DC 20510

April 4, 2025

The Honorable Donald J. Trump President The White House 1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump:

We are writing to call on you to rescind the Executive Order (EO) *Exclusions from Federal Labor-Management Relations Programs* issued on March 27, 2025. This order, which will strip away collective bargaining rights for 75 percent of the federal workforce, is an unprecedented assault on the fundamental rights of 1.5 million American federal workers as well as the broader labor movement. Additionally, the EO violates the narrow authorities granted to the President by Congress and is therefore unlawful.

Collective bargaining is the strongest tool that workers have available to create a fair workplace. This action strips away those hard-earned rights – which have been upheld by presidents from both parties for decades – from federal workers who keep our country running, including nurses who care for veterans, inspectors who keep our food safe to eat, teachers who educate our children, and so many more. Additionally, the EO's exclusion of entire departments and agencies from collective bargaining opens the door to potential abuse, retaliation, and political interference. Without union representation, federal employees – including whistleblowers and veterans – will lose vital protections that ensure their ability to serve the American people without fear of unjust reprisal.

Furthermore, this EO not only undermines the principles of fair labor practices but also threatens the efficiency and effectiveness of the federal government, jeopardizing the delivery of critical services to the American people. As a direct result of this assault on federal workers, we anticipate delays in Americans receiving their tax refunds and veterans' benefits. This will cause unnecessary hardship for millions of Americans who depend on these services.

The freedom to join a union and collectively bargain is central to achieving the American dream for millions of American workers. This action is the single most anti-worker and anti-union presidential action since Ronald Reagan fired striking air traffic controllers in 1981, and it must be reversed immediately.

Finally, this EO is in clear violation of the President's narrow and rarely used authorities under the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute. While Congress granted the President narrow authority to exclude some agencies from collective bargaining, those exclusions can only be made if that agency has a primary function in intelligence, counterintelligence, investigative, or national security work, and only if the statute cannot be applied "in a manner consistent with national security requirements and considerations."¹ However, this Administration has made

¹ 5 U.S.C. § 7103(b)(1)

clear that the EO's exclusions are not based on national security concerns, but instead as retaliation for labor unions defending their members' rights and making it easier to fire federal employees. This EO is clearly inconsistent with the President's authorities and is illegal.

We urge you to immediately rescind this harmful, unlawful EO and to reaffirm the rights of federal workers to unionize and collectively bargain. The American people deserve a federal workforce that is protected, respected, and empowered to carry out its duties effectively.

Sincerely,

Donald Norcross Member of Congress Co-Chair, Congressional Labor Caucus

Steven Horsford

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