

CALHOUN COUNTY COMMISSION

1702 NOBLE STREET, SUITE 103
ANNISTON, ALABAMA 36201
TELEPHONE (256) 241-2800
FAX (256) 231-1744

COMMISSIONERS

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County Attorney

March 1, 2005

Program Executive Office, NSPS
Attn: Mr. Brad Bunn
1400 Key Blvd., Suite B-200
Arlington, VA 22209-5144

Re: National Security Personnel System

Dear Mr. Bunn:

Calhoun County, Alabama, is home to one of the brightest stars in the entire Department of Defense's logistics hemisphere. Anniston Army Depot is a shining example of what a first class ordnance facility should be like. It is our conclusion that the reason AAD stands tall in reputation and production is because of the dedication and work ethics of the AAD workforce. Any organization's success or failure can be traced to the strength and use of the backbone by the men and women on the production line.

We are extremely proud of what our workers at AAD have meant to the United States and to the entire world. At the same time, we have grave concerns about rules enacted by the DoD and the effect on our front line workers.

The proposed regulations, known as the National Security Personnel System (NSPS), were printed in the Federal Register on February 14, 2005. The Calhoun County Commission is angry that these proposals seem to treat the employees who help defend our country as the enemy. We believe that mistreating the employees of AAD with the enactment of these rules will hurt the agency's mission. This system will change the way workers are paid, evaluated, promoted, fired, scheduled, and treated. These rules would create a system in which federal managers are influenced by favoritism rather than serving the civil concerns of the American people.

Under the General Schedule and FWS, employee pay was unquestioned. It was funded by Congress and could not be taken away. However, NSPS will take away this certainty. Salaries and bonuses are funded by DoD. In the past, as recently as just last year, DoD did not fund its

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awards program. Given the agency's miserable record on this issue, how can employees feel confident that salaries and bonuses will be funded in the future?

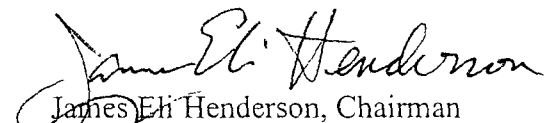
With the new patronage pay system, which DoD calls "pay for performance," the amount of a worker's salary will depend almost completely on the personal judgment of his or her manager. This system will force workers to compete with one another for pay raises, which will destroy teamwork, increase conflict among employees, and reward short-term outcomes. There is no guarantee that even the best workers will receive a pay raise or that the pay offered will be fair or competitive. This system will create a situation in which workers are in conflict with one another and afraid to speak out about harassment, violations of the law, and workplace safety problems. Furthermore, there will be no impartial appeal system to assure that everyone is treated fairly.

NSPS will allow managers to schedule employees to work without sufficient advance notice of schedule changes. This will make it extremely difficult for working parents to care for their children and family. It will also mean that abusive managers could harass employees with bad schedules or short notice. Overtime rotations can be canceled, which means that employees may not be able to plan adequately for childcare and other important responsibilities.


Federal employees could be assigned anywhere in the world, even into a war zone, with little or no notice. Federal employees signed up for civilian jobs. They did not enlist in the military. Today's volunteer system works well.

America is at war. We are fighting for democracy abroad. But the regulations are an attack on workers' basic rights. Furthermore, NSPS will divert the attention of defense workers from the soldiers' welfare to protecting themselves from abuse on the job. We urge you to force DoD to rethink this proposal. Work rules are needed that preserve fairness, serve the American people, and respect the rights of Defense Department workers.

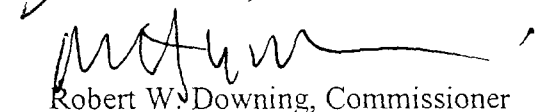
Sincerely,



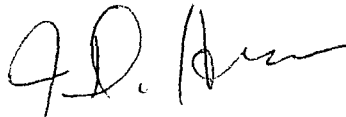
James Eli Henderson, Chairman



James A. Dunn, Commissioner



Robert W. Downing, Commissioner



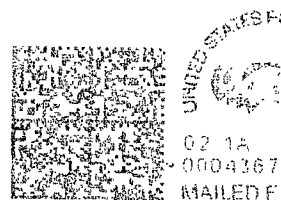
J. D. Hess, Commissioner



Rudy Abbott, Commissioner

JEH:jh

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