

# NFFE News



## **NFFE Fights OPM Attempt to Poison 2019 NDAA; VA Privatization Bill Flies through Congress**

**May 25, 2018**

As NFFE members descended on Washington, D.C. for the 2018 Legislative Week, OPM sent a letter to House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) requesting billions in cuts to federal worker retirement for inclusion within the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). At the time that the OPM letter was written, the NDAA was under consideration in the House Armed Services Committee.



**A busy week in Congress yielded mixed results, but the voice of NFFE was heard loud and clear.**

NFFE members responded by taking our message to Capitol Hill, and NFFE national organized a coalition letter signed by 27 federal labor unions to fight off any cuts to retirement. The effort was a success, and the NDAA moved forward without any of the cuts requested by OPM. This week, as the NDAA moved to the floor of the House for final passage, NFFE and its coalition partners worked hard to manage more than 500 amendments. NFFE secured victories on several program and policy issues. Unfortunately, an amendment to require additional reporting on the use of official time passed. Labor will work with the Senate to remove the amendment language in conference committee over the next few weeks.

In another turn of events, Congress moved quickly to pass the VA MISSION Act, a \$55 billion so-called reform bill that dramatically increases the authority of the VA to privatize veteran care and services. The bill also created a closure and realignment panel that will review VA facilities across the nation and presumably, recommend closures. The bill was hard to stop because the Act enjoyed overwhelming support from Democrats and Republicans, and it was paraded by nearly all veterans' service organizations. The MISSION was a huge victory for privatization forces, including the Koch-backed Concerned Veterans of America. NFFE will continue to monitor the implementation of the law.

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