



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Affiliated with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers



NFFE News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 17, 2018

Contact: Steve Lenkart

Phone: (202) 216-4458

NFFE Slams Executive Order to Politicize Administrative Courts as a “Shameless Return to the Spoils System”

Washington, D.C. – Today, the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE), representing over 110,000 federal employees, expressed serious concern over President Trump’s recent Executive Order (EO) that directs the creation of a new system for hiring administrative law judges (ALJs), replacing the current merit-based, competitive hiring process for one used to hire political appointees. The new system will give the White House and agency political heads the authority to hand select each judge.

“The current system of ALJ selection is built to syphon out politically motivated applicants,” stated Randy Erwin, NFFE National President. “It is a very good and reliable system for selecting executive branch judges because it ensures ALJ candidates are highly trained in the area in which they will adjudicate, and the competitive hiring process eliminates political patronage hires. The only reason to destroy this honest and transparent system is to corrupt the ALJ corps for political or financial gain.”

The July 10th EO worries many federal employee groups and good government advocates that because the hiring authority for the judges will rest solely with political appointees, the professional ALJ corps will turn into a group of political hacks and patronage hires. This is a far departure from the current system that requires ALJ candidates to undergo a competitive selection process which includes multiple interviews and a written exam aimed to ensure candidates are well-qualified and will adjudicate impartially.

“This destructive change effects every American, not just the federal employees who rely on ALJ decisions for workplace disputes.” continued Erwin. “Replacing qualified judges with political appointees will destroy adjudicatory neutrality for policy and regulatory enforcement covering Wall Street, environmental pollution, defense procurement, food safety, aviation safety, intellectual property rights, veterans care, immigration, pharmaceutical regulation, and much more. This is nothing more than a shameless return to the Spoils system where political patronage reigned over honest government that serves the American people.”

###

Established in 1917, the National Federation of Federal Employees is the oldest union representing civil service federal employees. NFFE represents 110,000 federal employees in 35 departments and agencies government-wide. NFFE is affiliated with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, AFL-CIO. For more information, go to www.nffe.org.