

NFFE News



NFFE and IAM Fighting to Save Hundreds of Red River Army Depot Jobs

August 3, 2018

NFFE and IAM are mobilizing its membership and working with elected officials to fight against the latest round of announced layoffs to strike Red River Army Depot (RRAD) and the Texarkana, Texas community.

Base command on July 16 announced plans to lay off 207 defense contract employees and 98 federal term employees by August 30, 2018. If the layoffs proceed, more than 900 RRAD federal and contract workers will have been let go in the last four months.

“We have serious questions about the effect this drastic reduction in workforce will have on the Army’s ability to fulfill its mission, not only today but for years to come,” said IAM International President Bob Martinez. “The Machinists are doing everything we can to stop these layoffs and will continue to make every resource available for our members, their families and the entire Texarkana community.”



Combined, NFFE and the IAM represent approximately 2,200 employees at RRAD

“The layoffs occurring at Red River Army Depot are a bad idea for this country,” said NFFE-IAM National President Randy Erwin. “The work done at Red River is critical to supporting the war fighter. If we need to ramp up production in the event of conflict, we won’t have the capacity to do it if these layoffs continue.”

Martinez and Erwin sent joint letters on July 31 to members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives expressing concern about the impact of the layoffs at RRAD and requested political assistance in stopping the harmful layoffs.

The NFFE-IAM team lobbied successfully to include an amendment in the National Defense Authorization Act requiring each branch of the military to complete a long-term study of depot maintenance workforce needs.

The NFFE-IAM team has met multiple times with congressional delegations in Texas, Arkansas and Oklahoma to protect jobs at RRAD. As a result of their efforts, six U.S. Senators sent a letter on July 12 to the commanding general of the U.S. Army Materiel Command to bring the necessary work to RRAD to stop the dismantling of the highly-skilled workforce. U.S. Rep. John Ratcliffe on July 26 sent a letter with three other members of Congress also asking the commanding general to seek alternative work for the depot.

A University of Arkansas economic study commissioned by the IAM shows that the previous round of layoffs alone, totaling 585 jobs, would slash the region's economic output by \$255 million and result in the loss of more than 400 jobs in the community.

“The study reinforces what [we] have been saying since the start,” said IAM Southern Territory General Vice President Mark A. Blondin. “Laying off more workers at Red River Army Depot just brings further devastation to a community that's already been pummeled by these actions. This is going to be a financial drain in the millions for the region of Texarkana, in all the surrounding states. Our fight isn't about just saving union jobs. This is about saving entire communities. From a fiduciary standpoint, the numbers just don't add up.”

NFFE and IAM represent approximately 2,200 employees at RRAD. IAM Local 1243 represents federal contract employees and NFFE-IAM Local 2189 represents federal term employees.

Red River Army Depot, established in 1941, is a U.S. military combat system and tactical vehicle repair and maintenance facility in Texarkana, Texas.

www.NFFE.org