

**International  
Association of  
Machinists and  
Aerospace Workers**



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OFFICE OF THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

June 27, 2017

The Honorable John McCain  
Chairman  
Senate Armed Service Committee  
228 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed  
Ranking Member  
Senate Armed Services Committee  
228 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman McCain and Ranking Member Reed,

**We strongly oppose any attempt to weaken important worker protections in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2018. This includes misguided attempts to remove both the Service Contract Act (SCA) and the Davis Bacon Act from the NDAA, as well as forcing federal employees out of their jobs after as little as two years simply to avoid paying a living wage and retirement benefits.**

The Machinists Union represents thousands of employees and contractors working in and for the Department of Defense (DOD). Our members are proud of the vital work they perform in ensuring our national security. Their knowledge, integrity, and dedication should be rewarded, not penalized as these ill-advised proposals would do.

Both the SCA and the Davis Bacon Act were enacted to prevent the exploitation of workers through the use of our tax dollars and to ensure that contractors competed on the quality of their service. These Acts provide a wage base that prevents a race to the bottom and stops federal employment from being a ticket to poverty. Without the protection afforded by these Acts, companies will drive down wages and benefits in order to maximize profits.

This ill conceived low wage strategy is not without its costs as the Government Accountability Office (GAO) found when reviewing airport screening after the attacks of September 11, 2001. According to the GAO, the low wages of private contractor airport screeners contributed to a rapid turnover of the workforce that led to ineffective screening practices.

Likewise, the incredibly short sighted proposal to limit federal employment at the DOD to only two to eight years will undercut morale, as well as the stability and effectiveness of a committed workforce. The institutional knowledge that develops over time will deteriorate, all to the benefit of our adversaries. We truly live in dangerous times and we cannot afford to short change our national security.

These horrible proposals to undo critical worker protections do not represent the fundamental American values of decency and fairness. I urge you in the strongest terms possible to eliminate them from the 2018 NDAA.

Please contact Legislative Director Hasan Solomon at (202) 420-5902 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Robert Martinez, Jr.  
International President