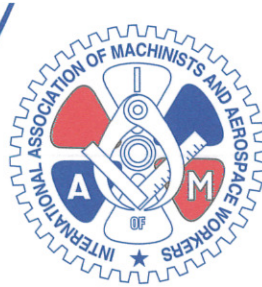


**International
Association of
Machinists and
Aerospace Workers**



9000 Machinists Place
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772-2687

Area Code 301
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OFFICE OF THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

November 29, 2017

Dear Representative,

On behalf of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, I strongly urge you to oppose H.R. 4182, the so-called “Ensuring a Qualified Civil Service Act of 2017 (EQUALS ACT of 2017).” If enacted, this legislation would unnecessarily extend the probation of competitive service federal employees from one year to a minimum of two years. The Machinists Union strongly opposes this legislation which leaves employees with few civil protections. This deeply flawed legislation seeks to create a federal workforce of temporary employees that will only serve to undermine worker morale, disrupt the federal labor force, and leave new federal employees in probationary limbo for an unnecessary period of time.

Currently, candidates for federal jobs are put through an extensive selection process prior to being hired, followed by a one year probationary period. This amount of time should be more than sufficient for a competent manager in the federal sector to determine if a new employee has the ability to accomplish the duties for which the employee was hired. In the private sector, the typical probationary period for newly-hired employees is three to six months. Federal sector managers should not need a probationary period four to eight times longer than private sector managers to determine if an employee is the right fit.

H.R. 4182 would not only extend an employee’s probation to two years, but this extended probationary period would not even start until after the newly-hired federal employee completes their “formal training program” and acquires all licenses and certifications required for their position. This could easily result in federal employees serving an incredibly long and unfair three to five year probationary period.

Additionally, extending the probation reduces the due process rights of employees. Civil service protections and the merit system exist to protect government employees from agency politics. Without these rights, federal employees on long term probation will have little to no protection against discrimination, manager retaliation, or exposure to arbitrary termination without just cause.

For all of these reasons, I strongly urge you to oppose H.R. 4182. Should you have any questions, please contact Legislative Director Hasan Solomon at (202) 420-5902.

Sincerely,

Robert Martinez, Jr.
International President