

-----**Subject:** Latest on NSPS Repeal in FY08 Senate and House Defense Authorization Bills

To All IFPTE DoD Locals,

I wanted to forward you all along the latest status of the NSPS repeal language that IFPTE, in conjunction with the UDWC, is advocating be included in the final FY08 Defense Authorization bill.

Below is a summary of the developments of a UDWC Legislative Committee meeting that took place yesterday afternoon. As Chair of the UDWC Legislative Committee I would normally have headed this meeting and provided this summary. However, due to time sensitive and very critical Hill meetings involving the GAO issue, I was unable to attend yesterday and deferred to NFFE Legislative Director, Brother Randy Erwin, to Chair yesterday's legislative committee meeting.

Randy Erwin provided the below summary of where we are now that the Senate Defense Authorization is moving along, and where we are looking to go in the coming weeks and months as this issue enters conference. It can be assumed that IFPTE and the UDWC will advocate for all of the House language, doing away with (k), and the good parts of the Senate language. When we get the Conference proposal formalized, I will forward it along to all of you.

Rest assured, NSPS repeal remains a top priority of IFPTE. Through our continued work in the UDWC we are optimistic there will be repeal language adopted by Congress later this year.

As things continue to unfold and when we require grassroots action, I will keep you notify you all in a timely manner.

My continued thanks for all of your support for this important issue.

In Solidarity,
Matt

Matthew S. Biggs
Assistant to the President/Legislative Director
International Federation of Professional &
Technical Engineers (IFPTE), AFL-CIO
8630 Fenton Street, Suite 400
Silver Spring, MD 20910
T- (301) 565-9016
F -(301) 565-0018
mbiggs@ifpte.org

----- Original Message -----

Sent: Wednesday, June 13, 2007 4:00 PM

Subject: Legislative committee action

Here is a summary of yesterday's UDWC legislative committee meeting and their recommendations.

Status of Senate Bill: The Senate Defense Authorization language has now been posted. It can be found on page 357-8 of S 1547. Here is a link to the bill: http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=110_cong_bills&docid=f:s1547pcs.txt.pdf. We are expecting the bill to make it to the Senate floor before the July 4th recess. It could be on the floor the week of June 25th. We are not expecting any amendments on the floor. The outside chance of the

immigration issue resurfacing could push the timetable back until after recess . Since the EFCA bill is scheduled to be on the floor along with the Energy bill next week the Defense Authorization will not make it to the floor next week.

Beth Moten from AFGE gave the legislative committee a rundown of the differences between the House and Senate versions of the bill. Thank you, Beth, for putting this together. There are major differences between the two versions. The committee has recommended that the lawyers committee get together and prioritize what aspects of the bills we most want retained in the final version of the bill. AFGE has indicated that removing (K) is far and away the most important priority to them. All other issues are a rather secondary to removing (K). To this effect, Beth has requested that someone from the lawyers committee put together a clear and concise explanation of the importance of (K) to be used as a lobbying document.

Where We Go From Here: All the UDWC unions should make the most of the July 4th recess to contact members in their home districts/states. Going into conference, which we expect to be a drawn-out process that could take a couple months to complete, we will be focusing our greatest lobbying efforts on members of the Senate Armed Services Committee, with a special emphasis on Levin and Collins. Once the bill is off the Senate floor, we will likely author a dear conferee letter and turn up our lobbying effort on likely conferees.

I understand that several unions tried to conference into the meeting and were unable. Please feel free to contact Randy or Beth if you have any questions about what the committee has decided.

On behalf of the Coalition I want to thank the Legislative committee for the following report and all their hard work.

Thanks to Richard and H.T. for hosting the meeting.

=====
Attached is a brief summary prepared by Beth Moten on the difference between the House and Senate language, thanks Beth.

-
The Senate Armed Services Committee filed its version of the 2008 Defense Authorization Bill this week. It is tentatively scheduled for floor consideration the week of June 25th.

The Senate National Security Personnel System (NSPS) provisions, while an improvement over current law, do not go as far as the House bill, and we will be working hard to ensure that in the final conference between the House and Senate, that as much of the House language is retained as possible.

The Senate bill does the following:

1. excludes all wage grade employees from all of NSPS;
2. restores chapter 71 collective bargaining rights, but fails to eliminate section (k) of current law, which allows the department unfettered discretion to make monumental changes to qualification standards, recruitment, and appointments to positions, assignments, detailing, transferring and promotions, reductions-in-force protections, and veterans preference. Section (k) must be eliminated for any true restoration of collective bargaining rights to be ensured.

3. prevents the negotiation of any "rate of pay established or adjusted in accordance with the requirements of this section". Potentially, this leaves open the possibility of negotiating about design and implementation of new pay systems.

The House bill, by contrast, does not exempt entire classes of employees, such as Wage Grade. However, it does the following:

1. restores completely the statutory authority for collective bargaining rights;
2. restores the statutory authority establishing an independent appeal for employees facing adverse actions;
3. permits the department to move forward with its new pay system but requires full collective bargaining before it can be applied to rank-and-file employees.

We are not planning a Senate floor amendment on NSPS, but rather we will work to persuade the Senate to agree to the House version when the bill goes to conference.

Lobbying and grassroots materials for the joint House-Senate conference on NSPS will be developed in the near future.

Please let us know if you have any questions.