

Joseph A. Beaudoin
National President

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Richard G. Thissen
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August 1, 2013

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative,

On behalf of the five million federal employees and annuitants represented by the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE), I urge you to oppose H.R. 2879, the "Stop Government Abuse Act," which combines into one bill a series of bills that were scheduled for votes this week as part of a "Stop Government Abuse Week" publicity stunt.

As Dana Milbank wrote on Tuesday for the *Washington Post*, "the real 'government abuse' is what the House itself is doing: Only four of the 12 appropriations bills have cleared the chamber so far. And because the House plans to be in session just nine days in September, that guarantees that government finances won't be in order in time for the new fiscal year."

Yesterday, the Transportation and Housing and Urban Development (THUD) appropriations bill was pulled from the floor schedule. As reported by *The Hill*, when asked why, Majority Whip Kevin McCarthy, R-CA, explained: "We just don't have enough time." Perhaps that is because rather than solving real policy problems, such as government budgeting and financing, the House is wasting its time on a bill that takes cheap, rhetorical shots at the federal government and its workforce.

We are disappointed that the House is spending its limited time voting on a bill with little chance of passage by the full Congress when serious budget issues remain unresolved. This House continues to be fixated on legislation ripped from the headlines and motivated by a desire to score political points back home. The bill is hardly what Congress should be focusing on before taking a five-week recess.

It is a bad sign for the country when members of the House view attacks on our nation's public servants as a political win. Every day, millions of federal employees, including nearly 500,000 veterans, do important work on behalf of the United States. We should be applauding their efforts, not demeaning them.

While NARFE opposes the many provisions of the bill taking aim at the government and its employees, such as those derived from H.R. 1660, 2711, 2579, 2565, we are particularly concerned with Title I of H.R. 2879, derived from the Common Sense in Compensation Act, H.R. 1541, which employs about as much common sense as driving on the wrong side of the road. By limiting the ability of federal managers to reward good performance, the provision runs

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counter to the common-sense notion that individuals respond to positive incentives by curtailing performance-based awards and bonuses, and performance-based pay increases.

At a time when federal employees have had their pay frozen for three years and counting, are facing pay cuts through furloughs and are worried about the continued threat that sequestration poses to their job security, the bills scheduled for votes this week add insult to injury. We can only hope the persistent erosion of respect for those in civil service will not deprive us of the highly skilled intelligence officers needed to piece clues together to find the next Bin Laden, lower the quality of doctors caring for our veterans or researching a cure for cancer, or thin the pool of qualified leaders necessary for every aspect of government. These are real threats that must be considered as the attacks on our nation's federal workforce continue.

For these reasons, I urge you to oppose the H.R. 2879, the "Stop Government Abuse Act." If you would like to discuss this further, please contact NARFE's Legislative Director Jessica Klement at jklement@narfe.org or 703-838-7760. Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,



Joseph A. Beaudoin
National President

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