



A bold voice for transportation workers

June 10, 2014

Vote NO on Gingrey Amendment to Eliminate Official Time

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD), I urge to you vote NO on the Gingrey amendment to the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (T-HUD) Appropriations Act (H.R. 4745). This misguided amendment would eliminate the use of official time by use of federal employees including those at the Department of Transportation and its modal agencies that are critical to an efficient and safe transportation system.

Proponents of this amendment falsely claim that it is a fiscally conservative reform that would save money. The opposite, in fact, is true. Under federal law, elected or volunteer union representatives can be granted official time to perform representational activities during work hours. Official time cannot be used for activities such as organizing or political advocacy, but rather labor-management functions such as collaborative resolution of workplace disputes, coordination of meetings and workgroups, and negotiation and implementation of workplace conditions or new operating procedures. Official time helps federal agencies operate more smoothly, and ultimately saves the government money by avoiding lengthy and costly arbitration or litigation procedures for minor labor-management disputes.

Since passage of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978, the use of official time has been an important tool for both labor and management to improve our government agencies. It helps foster a collaborative and healthy relationship between labor and management that allows our agencies to better serve the American people. This amendment would only serve to escalate otherwise minor disputes that can be quickly resolved, increase disharmony in the federal workplace, and be a drain on taxpayer dollars.

At a time when our government faces numerous challenges and the need to modernize to meet 21st Century demands, the elimination of official time would be especially costly both in financial terms and the effectiveness of services provided by federal workers.

I urge you to vote NO on the Gingrey amendment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edward Wytkind', written over a light blue circular stamp.

Edward Wytkind
President

Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO

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