

February 8, 2021

The Honorable Robert Scott  
Chairman  
Education and Labor Committee  
2176 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Virginia Foxx  
Ranking Member  
Education and Labor Committee  
2176 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Scott and Ranking Member Foxx:

On behalf of the undersigned unions which represent hundreds of thousands of federal government workers and letter carriers employed by the United States Postal Service across the country, we write to urge your support for a presumption of worksite illness through the Federal Employee Compensation Act (FECA) for COVID-19 in the Education and Labor Committee's section of the COVID-19 relief package for the Budget Reconciliation bill. Our union members are dedicated public servants working on the frontlines to protect and serve the American public.

We are strongly supportive of Section 2103 of the Committee draft, providing "eligibility for workers' compensation for federal employees diagnosed with COVID-19." This section would apply to all federal workers and employees of the United States Postal Service who are required to report for duty and interact with coworkers and the public, who then contract COVID-19. A presumption of workplace illness would allow federal employees to make a Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) claim without facing a potentially lengthy denial and appeals process.

Among the workers who would be eligible for this benefit are support personnel at the Veterans Health Administration and Indian Health Service facilities, Transportation Security Officers exposed in airports, letter carriers delivering mail across the country, corrections officers employed in Bureau of Prisons facilities, Customs and Border Patrol Officers and other law enforcement officers, federal firefighters, air traffic controllers, inspectors in meat and poultry plants, and numerous others serving the public on the frontlines.

Many union members have been unable to apply for FECA benefits within the 30-day required filing deadline as they are too sick with COVID-19, and as a result they and their families are denied benefits and pay. Employees who are hospitalized inevitably miss deadlines and lose benefits. A presumption of workplace illness will help ensure that these federal and postal workers have access to timely FECA benefits during their illness and while addressing long-term health effects from COVID-19 contracted in the performance of their duties.

Our unions strongly urge your support for inclusion of Section 2103 in the Education and Labor section of the COVID-19 relief package. For additional information or questions, please contact Fiona Kohrman, [fiona.kohrman@afge.org](mailto:fiona.kohrman@afge.org).

Sincerely,

American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE)  
International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE)  
National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA)  
National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC)  
National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU)