

AFL-CIO

March 7, 2018

Dear Senator/Representative:

On behalf of the undersigned unions representing more than one million federal employees who work in virtually every Executive Branch agency across the country and around the world, we write to express our deep concern regarding the recent announcement by the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) that it intends to close its regional offices in Dallas and Boston.

The FLRA plays a critical role in enforcing federal labor law through its adjudicatory and prosecutorial roles; it also trains union officers and agency officials on their rights and responsibilities under the law. The proposed reduction of critical frontline staff in the regional offices and the number of those regional offices would critically impede the FLRA's ability to carry out its mission.

We are calling for a Government Accountability Office (GAO) to study the impact of the proposed closures on the ability of the FLRA to carry out its mission as the law intends both nationally and in the regions that would be affected by the closures. Until the GAO report is completed and Congress has had the opportunity to consider the impact of these proposed closures, we urge the Congress to include in the FY18 Omnibus a provision explicitly preventing the FLRA from closing the offices.

Closing two of seven regional offices puts FLRA staff farther away from the parties relying on their services. The harm is compounded by the reduction in the amount of funds allowing the staff to travel to conduct elections, representational hearings, onsite Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) investigations and other critical work that constitutes the agency's core mission and allows its staff to build relationships with parties.

In February, Congress passed a two-year budget package that increases funding caps to non-defense domestic agencies by \$63 billion in fiscal year 2018 and \$68 billion in fiscal year 2019. The plan to close FLRA regional offices was submitted before Congress approved this additional funding and agreed to by the President. The additional funding over the next two years eliminates any rationale for reducing the FLRA's resources.

For operational, mission, and budget reasons, it is clear that the FLRA's plan to close two regional offices should not go forward. It would undermine the agency's ability to carry out its mission, and was devised under budgetary and policy assumptions that are no longer current or accurate. Until the GAO is able to provide Congress with an analysis of the effect of the proposed closures, we ask that Congress prohibit the closures and position eliminations. If you have any questions on this matter, please contact Mia Dell of AFGE's Legislative Department at 202-639-4003 or Byron Charlton of the AFL-CIO Department of Legislation at 202-637-5290.

Sincerely,

American Federation of Labor Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)
American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE)
National Association of Government Employees (NAGE)
International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF)
International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW)
Metal Trades Department, AFL-CIO
International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE)
Seafarers International Union (SIU)
Federal Education Association (FEA)
National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE)
National Education Association (NEA)
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW)
National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC)
Masters, Mates and pilots (MM&P)
Department of Professional Employee (DPE/AFLCIO)
International Union of Police Association (IUPA)
Marine Engineers Beneficial Association (MEBA)
Professional Aviation Safety Specialist (PASS)
Transportation Trades Department (TTD)
American Federation of State County Municipal Employees (AFSCME)