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December 10, 2025

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the National Education Association, whose 3 million members educate and support students in public schools across America and in schools on stateside and overseas military bases, I urge you to vote YES on H.R. 2550, the Protect America's Workforce Act (PAWA), bipartisan legislation which would restore collective bargaining rights to federal employees across several agencies, including those in Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) schools. Votes associated with this issue may be included in the NEA Report Card for the 119th Congress.

The president's March 27, 2025 executive order, "Exclusions from Federal Labor-Management Relations Programs," stripped collective bargaining rights from 1 million federal servants in agencies ranging from the National Science Foundation and Department of Treasury to the Department of Defense and Veterans Administration. Although the executive order's stated targets are federal unions in agencies with "national security missions," its scope is far broader.

For more than a century, regardless of political affiliation or who controls the White House or Congress, federal lawmakers have shared an understanding that public-sector bargaining enables agencies and employees to engage constructively on many issues. Collective bargaining for Department of Defense civilian workers has been viewed as contributing positively to mission readiness and efficiency and strengthening the national defense.

Ending collective bargaining for 1 million federal workers is not in the public's interest.

While NEA is concerned about the loss of collective bargaining rights for federal civil servants in general, we are particularly troubled about the effects on DoDEA schools. Teachers and educational support professionals in these schools serve military-connected students facing the challenges of parental deployments and frequent moves. The educators' professional expertise is coupled with a unique understanding of how disruptive military life can be and its impact on student learning and mental health. Collective bargaining allows educators to advocate for the learning conditions in which students can thrive, such as class sizes that make one-to-one attention possible. Several measures show how successful DoDEA educators are, including the 2024 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the nation's report card. Fourth and eighth-grade students in DoDEA schools once again excelled.

Ending collective bargaining for DoDEA educators would also affect the schools' ability to attract and keep staff. This, in turn, could negatively affect the recruitment, retention, and readiness of service members and our military at large, many of whom are parents. They make untold sacrifices to keep our nation safe, and their children deserve the best education we can provide.

Given that the recently unveiled FY 2026 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) did not include a provision to prevent collective bargaining rights from being restricted within the Department of Defense, it is even more important that you pass the Protect America's Workforce Act. Please vote YES on H.R. 2550 and restore collective bargaining rights to civil servants who do the work our nation depends on.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Kimberly Trinca', written in a cursive style.

Kimberly Johnson Trinca
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association