

GOVERNMENT MANAGERS COALITION

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October 31, 2017

The Honorable Trey Gowdy, Chairman
The Honorable Elijah Cummings, Ranking Member
United States House of Representatives
Oversight and Government Reform Committee
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Gowdy, Ranking Member Cummings and Members of the Committee:

We write on behalf of the Government Managers Coalition (GMC), which is comprised of five major federal sector professional associations collectively representing the interests of over 200,000 supervisors, managers, and executives serving throughout the federal government.

Our coalition is supportive of the *Ensuring a Qualified Civil Service Act of 2017* (the *EQUALS Act*), introduced by Representative James Comer. We appreciate Rep. Comer's efforts to take the lead on this important legislation and would also like to commend the Committee for considering the measure.

We are encouraged that the *EQUALS Act* would grant agencies the authority to extend the probationary period for competitive service appointments and supervisors. In addition, this legislation would align appointments under competitive and senior executive service with the two-year trial period served under excepted service appointments, bringing consistency to hiring throughout government.

Extension of the probationary period is supported by a 2015 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report, [GAO-15-191](#). Chief Human Capital Officers (CHCO) commented to GAO that often supervisors within federal departments and agencies are not given sufficient time to accurately review performance before the probationary period is complete. The CHCO recommended an extension of the probationary period to the GAO in order to accurately assess an employee's abilities in the federal workforce. In addition, Congress has already approved a two-year probationary period for employees at the Department of Defense, as part of the Fiscal Year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), P.L. 114-92.

The GMC's mission is to promote good government initiatives that foster effectiveness and efficiency throughout the federal government. We believe that this legislation will allow employees sufficient time on the job to demonstrate their abilities as well as allow for proper assessment. The measure will ensure that supervisors have the opportunity and authority to fulfill their performance management responsibilities that may not be feasible under the current one-year probationary period.

The GMC appreciates the Committee's consideration of this legislation. In light of ongoing agency reorganization efforts, it is now more important than ever to ensure federal managers making personnel decisions have a comprehensive toolset available that represents both flexibility for agencies and fairness for affected federal employees. We look forward to working with you on this legislation, as well as other commonsense federal workforce reform bills

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resulting in an improved federal government that can better serve the American public. Should you require additional information or want to discuss this issue further, please contact Rachel A. Emmons with the National Council of Social Security Management Associations (NCSSMA) at rachele@greystone-group.com or (202) 547-8530.

Sincerely,



ANDY TAYLOR
President
FAA Managers Association



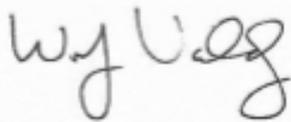
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