

GOVERNMENT MANAGERS COALITION

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October 20, 2017

The Honorable Ron Johnson, Chairman
The Honorable Claire McCaskill, Ranking Member
United States Senate
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee (HSGAC)
340 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member McCaskill, 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 S. 1887, *the Direct Hire of Students and Recent Graduates Act*, recently introduced by Sen. James Lankford, Chairman of the HSGAC Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management, and approved by the full Committee earlier this month. We appreciate Sen. Lankford's efforts to take the lead on this important legislation and would also like to commend the Committee for advancing the measure.

We are encouraged that S. 1887 would grant expedited hiring authority to agency heads to bring on individuals in colleges or graduate schools, or those who have recently completed their studies. The GMC and our member organizations firmly believe that the federal government must have a full range of hiring authorities available to ensure we can hire the best and the brightest as we recruit the next generation of federal workers.

Most current Office of Personnel Management (OPM) hiring authorities favor veterans. The GMC strongly supports hiring of veterans and initiatives undertaken to ensure our veteran candidates are appropriately represented on recruitment listings. In like manner, we also realize the value of candidate listings that mirror the diversity of the public the federal government serves. It is essential that we have a full range of hiring authorities to allow for the greatest range of diversity in our candidate pools. We realize different hiring authorities may favor certain candidate groups, but we support an approach that combines all available hiring authorities to optimize our collection of diverse applicants. We feel that S. 1887 will help expand the options available to agencies when hiring.

We see merit in the fact that an agency leader could appoint a "qualified individual" to any competitive service, professional or administrative position at the level of GS-11 or below. We also believe the limitations and reporting requirements included in the legislation will help ensure that merit system principles are upheld and a balanced implementation will be undertaken. Agencies would still be required to adhere to merit system principles and the appointments could not make up more than 15 percent of the number of appointments made to similar jobs in the previous year. Current students appointed under the new authority would serve on a temporary basis, but their agency head could appoint them to a permanent position upon their graduation. OPM would be responsible for creating regulations for the new law and agencies would report annually on their use of the authority.

We look forward to Congress advancing this sensible legislation, as well as other bills affecting the shape of agency workforces. As you do, the GMC hopes that legislators will continue to consider the necessity of adequately equipping and training the managers who are tasked with carrying out the difficult job of restructuring our federal government. In light of ongoing agency reorganization efforts, it is more important than ever to ensure federal managers making personnel decisions have available a comprehensive toolset that

cc: Members of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee

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represents both flexibility for agencies and fairness for affected federal employees. We feel that S. 1887, *the Direct Hire of Students and Recent Graduates Act*, is a welcome and much-needed addition to that toolset.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Rachel A. Emmons with the National Council of Social Security Management Associations (NCSSMA) at rachele@greystone-group.com or (202) 547 8530.

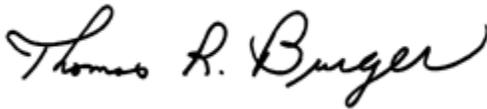
Sincerely,



ANDY TAYLOR
President
FAA Managers Association



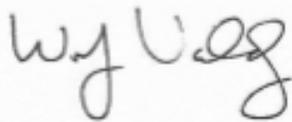
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