



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL ENGINEERS AFL-CIO & CLC

501 3rd Street, NW, Suite 701, Washington, DC 20001
202-239-4880 • FAX 202-239-4881 • www.ifpte.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, June 4, 2008

Contact: Matt Biggs
(202) 239-4880

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Gregory J. Junemann
PRESIDENT

Paul Shearon
SECRETARY-TREASURER

AREA VICE PRESIDENTS

Joseph McGee
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
NORTHWESTERN

Larry Chojnacki
MIDWESTERN

Cynthia Cole
SPEEA

Ron Dicks
WESTERN

Debbie D. Logsdon
SPEEA

John G. Lowden Jr.
ATLANTIC

Lawrence V. Marrell
SPEEA

R. Kirk Miller
EASTERN FEDERAL

Mark Mitchell
WESTERN

Andrew Müller
CANADIAN

Gerald Newsome
ATLANTIC

Benjamin T. Toyama
WESTERN FEDERAL

Charlie Trembley
NORTHEASTERN

Allan Yamaguchi
NORTHWESTERN

Reps. Danny Davis, Kucinich defend NASA workforce Union supports effort to protect technical excellence and independence

WASHINGTON, DC – As Congress prepares to re-authorize NASA for fiscal year 2009, House Federal Workforce, Postal Service and District of Columbia Subcommittee Chairman Danny Davis and Representative Dennis Kucinich, a member of the Subcommittee, have provided their support to the Civil Servant workforce at NASA. Chairman Davis and Congressman Kucinich, through a letter to the House Science and Technology Committee, have correctly recognized the ongoing damage that the administration is inflicting on NASA's technical workforce. The administration's management agenda continues to undermine technical excellence and independence at NASA and elsewhere in the Federal Government by eliminating critical employee protections and making technical experts vulnerable to suppression and coercion.

International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE) President Gregory Junemann expressed his appreciation for Chairman Davis' and Rep. Kucinich's pro-active effort to restore full protection to NASA's workforce:

"It is only because of civil-service rights, for example, that Dr. Hansen was able not to only survive intense harassment, but also to speak out publicly about the efforts of political appointees at NASA to block publication of objective data on climate change. Unfortunately, over the last 7 years, we have witnessed the disastrous consequences of the Bush administration's radical agenda to suppress and even to eliminate the voice of technical experts within the Executive Branch. We at IFPTE praise the collective leadership of Chairman Davis and Congressman Kucinich for their progressive effort to address these workforce problems at NASA. The Davis-Kucinich legislative proposals will begin the process of reversing years of neglect and damage as we move into a new Administration.

"The thousands of NASA-employed IFPTE members look forward to the inclusion of the Davis-Kucinich workforce proposals in this year's NASA re-authorization act."

The Kucinich-Davis proposals, all of which IFPTE supports, include:

- continued -

- **Extending the bipartisan layoff moratorium initiated by former House Science Committee Chairman Boehlert in the previous Authorization Act.** As long as the specter of a Reduction-In-Force (RIF) looms over employees' heads, NASA will scare away many of its talented employees and have trouble recruiting new scientists and engineers because they can receive greater financial rewards in the private sector. The undermining of job security through RIF threats, the suppression of intellectual expression, and the outsourcing (or elimination) of much of NASA's R&D work is making the private sector a more attractive alternative. This proposal will provide a modicum of job stability and make NASA jobs more competitive with those in corporate and academic sectors.
- **Capping the use of term limited appointments at 10%.** The second employee harassment tool used to undermine technical excellence and intimidate employees is the making of most new hires second-class employees, placed in term jobs that do not benefit from the full measure of civil-service protections. The pervasive improper use of term positions will allow NASA management to perform large scale layoffs without Congressional or judicial oversight and free from the constraints of civil-service rules for RIFs. This proposal will force NASA to provide standard civil-service rights to all of its employees, except in those few cases where term positions are appropriate.
- **Preventing the expensive & improper re-investigation of low-risk employees.** The Bush Administration has abused legitimate post-911 security concerns to harass loyal long-term NASA employees who do not perform sensitive jobs, with an intrusive invasion of their private financial, medical, and personal lives without any rational link to security. The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals has already imposed an injunction on this process for NASA's contract workforce at the Jet Propulsion Lab. This proposal will restore the privacy rights of all NASA civil-servant employees pending judicial review.

IFPTE is NASA's largest civil-servant union, and represents upwards of 85,000 U.S. and Canadian workers in the Private, Public and Federal sectors.

###