



# INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL ENGINEER

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Landslide Victory for Professionals at Legal Services Corporation**

#### **Professionals at Federally Funded Corporation that Provides Legal Aid to the Poor Vote to Join IFPTE Despite Union-Busting Campaign by Management**

**Washington** –The professional non-managerial oversight staff of the Legal Services Corporation (LSC), a federally funded corporation charged with providing legal services to the poor, has voted by an overwhelming margin Tuesday, 26 to 1, to join the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE).

An election became necessary at LSC when the corporation's Executive Management failed to grant bargaining rights to IFPTE -- despite the fact that over 95 percent of the employees in the bargaining unit had signed union authorization cards. The corporation's decision to deny voluntary recognition has troubled many on Capitol Hill. Senator Tom Harkin (D-IO), in a letter to the corporation's president Helaine Barnett, sent earlier this month stated, "Not to support the employees' desire to unionize is troubling. The card-check process is a fair and unbiased way for employees to choose a union. I am disappointed that an organization committed to protecting the rights of our most vulnerable citizens did not support the free choice of its workers to organize through this process."

Far from recognizing the union, LSC engaged a well-known anti-union law firm, Ford & Harrison LLP, that specializes in what it terms "union avoidance" to oppose the effort by employees to form a union. Under the direction of Ford & Harrison's senior counsel Patrick J. Stewart, the corporation engaged in mandatory meetings and other efforts to suppress union support. These activities appear to violate President Obama's Executive Order 13494, signed on January 30,

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## **LSC Workers Vote to Join IFPTE in a Landslide Victory/Page 2**

forbidding government contractors from using taxpayer resources for the purposes of discouraging workers from organizing a union.

While IFPTE was confident that it would win a legal battle over LSC's use of a union avoidance firm, members of the organizing committee stressed that their primary goal in forming a union was to create a new collaborative relationship with LSC's management.

IFPTE, well known for representing Boeing engineers and engineers at companies like United Airlines and General Electric, has in recent years become the union of choice for many federal employees and workers in the legal profession. The union represents hundreds of administrative law judges that handle Medicaid and Social Security disability issues as well federal judges who hear immigration appeals. In 2007, the Government Accountability Office's (GAO's) 1,800 analysts voted to affiliate with IFPTE. The union also represents NASA scientists, researchers at the Library of Congress and engineers employed by the Army Corps of Engineers among other government employees. The 65,000 –member IFPTE is one of the nation's fastest growing unions.

“We're thrilled that LSC's staff have chosen IFPTE,” said IFPTE President Greg Junemann. “Professional employees are increasingly looking for a collective voice on the job and a union such as ours guarantees them greater influence in decision-making in the workplace and a voice to explain the importance of LSC's mission to Congress and others.”

The Legal Services Corporation is the largest provider of civil legal aid for the poor in the United States. Established by Congress in 1974, LSC operates as a private, nonprofit corporation that promotes equal access to justice and provides grants for civil legal assistance to low-income Americans. LSC distributes more than 95 percent of its total funding to 137 independent nonprofit legal aid programs with 918 offices that provide legal assistance to low-income individuals and families throughout the nation.

**Across the nation, IFPTE represents 65,000 highly-skilled, white-collar workers in both the public and private sectors. IFPTE is the fastest growing union in the United States. The union is an affiliate of the AFL-CIO. More information can be found at [www.IFPTE.org](http://www.IFPTE.org).**

