

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
July 24, 2008

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## **AFGE Asks Congress to Block New Defense Department Worker Rules**

### **Pentagon Wants to Evade Congressional Restrictions, Gage Tells Senate Committee**

(WASHINGTON) – The American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) is accusing the Department of Defense (DOD) of trying to evade Congressional mandate with new proposed personnel regulations for civilian employees. AFGE national president, John Gage, says Congress should put a halt to new National Security Personnel System (NSPS) regulations proposed by the Pentagon in May. Gage testified this week before the Senate Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia.

AFGE represents hundreds of thousands of civilian defense workers. Earlier this year as part of the FY 2008 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA 2008) Congress placed some limitations on DOD's ability to impose NSPS on employees. In addition to excluding blue collar workers from NSPS, the law fully restored collective bargaining rights under 5 U.S.C. Chapter 71. May 22nd the Pentagon issued a revised set of regulations.

"The Defense Department's revised NSPS regulations cynically and purposely attempt to evade Congress' mandate for bargaining over most aspects of NSPS," Gage told the committee. "This double cross is unfortunate, but predictable. We strongly urge the Congress to block the implementation of the proposed regulations," he added.

Gage asked the Senate to provide further clarification of the NSPS provisions in the 2009 Defense Authorization Act.

"AFGE has heard from a number of managers who have implemented the NSPS guidelines for their employees. They complain that the rules are unpredictable, unfair, and opaque. Supervisors have been ordered to withhold information from their employees about their ratings, the pay pools are required to force performance ratings into a bell curve, and the decision about how – and by how much -- to compensate an employee for his "performance" is arbitrary," Gage said.

AFGE is the largest federal employee union representing 600,000 workers in the federal government and the government of the District of Columbia .