
HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 4039

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By Representatives Franklin, Winsley, Nelson, Mitchell, Leonard, Ogden, Heavey, Brekke, Jones, G. Cole, Basich, Ludwig, Belcher, Braddock and Anderson

Read first time 02/07/92. Referred to Committee on State Government.

1 TO THE HONORABLE GEORGE BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, AND
2 TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF
3 REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
4 UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED:

5 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of
6 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully
7 represent and petition as follows:

8 WHEREAS, The Hatch Act of 1939 vastly prohibits the political
9 rights and activities of Federal civilian and postal employees in any
10 endeavor beyond voting, privately expressing opinions about candidates
11 and issues, or contributing money to political organizations; and

12 WHEREAS, Federal civilian and postal workers are, first and
13 foremost, citizens of the United States, with interests and experiences
14 as diverse as the nation and should be allowed to more fully
15 participate in the democratic process; and

1 WHEREAS, The current language of the Hatch Act is so vague and
2 complex as to create a chilling effect on the activities of many
3 federal employees who often do not participate in currently permissible
4 activities out of confusion and concern for their job security; and

5 WHEREAS, The Commission on Political Activity of Government
6 Personnel which was created by Congress and charged with the task of
7 extensively studying the question of Hatch Act reform concluded in 1968
8 that the Act was confusing, ambiguous, restrictive, and negative in
9 character; and

10 WHEREAS, Federal civilian and postal employees deserve to and
11 should be permitted to participate voluntarily, as private citizens, to
12 the fullest extent possible in the political processes of the nation;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, The necessity for the protection of such employees and the
15 general citizenry from improper political solicitations or coercion has
16 decreased substantially in the years since the implementation of the
17 Hatch Act; and

18 WHEREAS, The merit system for employee advancement has become so
19 firmly entrenched in the American Civil Service system that the
20 existing Hatch Act is no longer required to protect employees from
21 improper pressure from their superiors; and

22 WHEREAS, Federal civilian and postal employees possess unparalleled
23 knowledge and understanding of the Government and its administration
24 which would add immensely to public policy debate if such employees
25 were freed to become more politically active;

26 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that the United
27 States Congress and President George Bush amend The Hatch Act, as
28 codified in Title 5, United States Code, to provide for Federal
29 civilian and postal employees to participate voluntarily as private
30 citizens in the political processes of the nation and to protect such

1 employees from improper political solicitation or coercion only to the
2 extent truly necessary.

3 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
4 transmitted to the Honorable George Bush, President of the United
5 States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the
6 House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the State of
7 Washington.