



POSITION STATEMENT

STREAMLINING HIRING AND DISCIPLINING GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES WHILE PRESERVING A NONPARTISAN, MERIT-BASED CIVIL SERVICE

Adopted by the IEEE-USA Board of Directors (June 2024)

More than 45 years have passed since the last meaningful civil service reform. Despite the growing challenges facing the nation, the system governing its more than two million federal civilian employees has remained stuck in the past. Two areas urgently need reform, employee hiring and accountability. Perhaps out of frustration with the present situation, some have proposed making most, if not all, federal employees at-will. However, doing so could reintroduce the “spoils system”, prevalent until 1883. A middle course of simplifying hiring and disciplining processes while preserving underlying merit principles and recognizing that most civil servants are competent and hard working is much to be preferred.

IEEE-USA recommends that Congress and the Administration:

1. Consolidate existing channels for employee appeals of adverse personnel actions into a single unified process, such as a federal court dedicated to hearing such appeals. Provide adequate capacity to assure timely resolution of appeals.
2. Greatly reduce the time required to fill vacant civil service positions with well qualified personnel.
3. Preserve Merit System Principles that assure a nonpartisan, merit-based Civil Service; do not make civil service employees at-will. Maintain and, if appropriate, strengthen the Hatch Act.
4. Continue strong whistle-blower protection to defend integrity in government.
5. Require Congressional approval for creating new excepted service schedules or

substantively changing existing ones.

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