

The LABOR Paper

621 Commercial #1B • Peoria, Illinois 61602 • 309-674-9715 or cell 309-264-1119

UNIONS LOSE BID TO STOP FEDERAL BUYOUT PROGRAM

By Mark Gruenberg, PAI Staff Writer

BOSTON (PAI) — A coalition of unions, led by the Government Employees (AFGE) apparently lost its bid to halt the Republican Donald Trump regime's "buyout" ultimatum aimed at 2.4 million federal workers.

On February 12, U.S. District Judge George O'Toole in Boston lifted the temporary pause he imposed since Trump, acting at the behest of his handler, multibillionaire Elon Musk, unveiled the "take it or leave it" buyout plan of eight months' severance pay, the week before.

Judge O'Toole threw the unions' case out by ruling they did not have legal "standing" to directly sue for damages, since they were not individually harmed. His decision disappointed AFGE President Everett Kelley, whose union—the largest for federal workers—took the lead in the case.

Trump's Office of Personnel Management chortled with glee at O'Toole's decision came down. It set a new—and immediate—deadline of 7 pm Eastern Time on February 12 for workers to sign up to quit at the end of February, but still get paid through September 30.

"OPM is pleased the court rejected a desperate effort to strike down the Deferred Resignation Program...The program is now closed. There is no longer any doubt: the Deferred Resignation Program was both legal and a valuable option for federal employees," OPM declared.

Some 75,000 workers took the buyouts, despite the vagueness of the terms, and despite the fact that despite the buyout's promise, if Congress doesn't approve a new government-wide spending bill by March 14, recip-

ients will join remaining workers on the no-pay line.

"The unions do not have the required direct stake in" OPM's "Fork In the Road Directive, but are challenging a policy that affects others, specifically executive branch employees. This is not sufficient," O'Toole wrote.

That "Fork in the Road" directive precisely mimics the language Trump's handler, Elon Musk, used when he fired most of the workers he inherited when he bought Twitter, renaming it X.

"Today's ruling is a setback in the fight for dignity and fairness for public servants," AFGE President Everett Kelley replied in a statement. "But it's not the end of that fight. AFGE's lawyers are evaluating the decision and assessing next steps. Importantly, this decision did not address the underlying lawfulness of the program."

"We continue to maintain it is illegal to force American citizens who have dedicated their careers to public service to make a decision, in a few short days, without adequate information, about whether to uproot their families and leave their careers for what amounts to an unfunded IOU from Elon Musk."

AFGE and other federal worker unions, including those who joined the larger union's lawsuit, have cautioned workers not to accept the Trump buyout offer.

They said its constantly changing promises leave unclear if workers who take the buyouts will be free to seek outside jobs, for example.

In their suit against Trump's "quit or take your chances" scheme on being fired, the unions called his personnel office's decision a massive "arbitrary and capricious" plan to get

rid of almost two million workers and replace them with Trump political hacks, just as in the spoils system of the Gilded Age.

That's also a key goal of the criminal corporate class backing Trump's firing plan—which extended to a February 12 Trump order mandating huge "reductions in force," governmentese for cashing workers, thus increasing profits.

The corporate class prefers untrained, neophyte and subservient Trumpites to career civil servants who know what crimes to seek out and punish. Trump's rookies, ideologues and charlatans don't.

The firings are also a long-time goal of the radical right, and part of Trump's planned constitutional coup d'état, an sim of the felonious president and his worker-hating puppeteer, multibillionaire Musk.

Left unsaid by the larger executive order is that success by the Trump regime would also completely disrupt the lives of more than two million workers and their families. That's not counting those who accepted the "voluntary" buyout.

"AFGE is bringing this suit with our partners today to protect the integrity of the government and prevent union members from being tricked into resigning from the federal service," Kelley said then.

"Federal employees shouldn't be misled by slick talk from unelected billionaires and their lackeys. Despite claims made to the contrary, this deferred resignation scheme—the buyout plan—is unfunded, unlawful, and comes with no guarantees. We won't stand by and let our members become the victims of this con."

AFSCME joined the suit "to stop the purge of qualified professionals from the federal government workforce. Not only are these actions illegal and a scam, but they are eroding the health and well-being of our communities," union President Lee Saunders said.

"These workers do everything from making sure families receive their Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security benefits on time to protecting our drinking water and the food we eat to overseeing our national security. If this chaos goes unchecked, it will have devastating impacts on working people."

National Association of Government Employees President David Holway said "The 'Fork Directive' is a blatant attempt to undermine the merit-based foundation of our civic Buyout

Continued on page 2

Union Night with the Rivermen
Friday, Feb 28th
Game starts at 7:15 PM
Tickets Only \$15 Must Pre-Purchase!



REBRAND NIGHT

\$3 12oz Domestic Draft Beer

PEORIA THE RIVER GIN

FEBRUARY 28
FRIDAY 7:15PM
TICKETS \$15
CALL 309-676-1040

Why Black History Month & DEI matters

Join Broadcast Journalist and Storyteller Garry Moore for an evening of lively discussion, humor, and music.

Monday February 17th, 6 p.m., Laborers Local 362 Hall, 2012 Fox Creek Road, Bloomington.



As the nation debates the value of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion programs, Garry will share historical information, rare books, and true stories from his 40 years of experience in radio and television. Prepare to be entertained and challenged as we look at myths, perceptions, and ethnic notions. Garry will also have copies of his book, *The Little Black Book for Journalists (Un) Afraid of Race* available for purchase.

Chicago native **Garry Moore** is currently the Operations/Programming Director for WPNV 106.3FM in Peoria. He is also a Music Teacher, Storyteller/ Cultural Arts Presenter, Theater Director and Playwright. Moore spent more than 30 years in television, helping to establish one of the nation's longest running morning news programs. During that time, he served as the union president for the Peoria Local of SAG-AFTRA (Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists). He has a B.S. Broadcast Production/Management and Master's Degree in Liberal Arts from Bradley University. Sponsored by the Bloomington & Normal Trades & Labor Assembly, Not In Our Town B-N and the YWCA of McLean County.



ILLINOIS AFL-CIO

FREE - LEGISLATIVE DIRECTORY APP

Download the Illinois AFL-CIO Legislative Directory App with updated information on your state and federal elected officials. Go to the app store and search "Illinois AFL-CIO"

By clicking on the directory and choosing an elected official, you will see information on Springfield and District offices.

Directly call or e-mail legislators from the app!

- Directory with addresses, phone, e-mails, websites and Facebook
- Maps
- Committees
- Legislative Agencies
- State Agencies



DOWNLOAD FROM YOUR APP STORE

(BOTH IOS APP STORE AND GOOGLE PLAY STORE ARE AVAILABLE)

Keep track of our legislators in Springfield. Take advantage of the Illinois AFL-CIO's free, legislative directory app as the Illinois General Assembly heads back into session. You can find information on your legislators, how to contact them, and other important details to navigate our state government.

Buyout

Continued from page 1

il service. NAGE will not allow our members to be intimidated into making hasty decisions based on misleading information.

"The administration must be held accountable for this unlawful directive, and we are committed to protecting the rights and jobs of our members. NAGE stands firmly against any effort to replace qualified professionals with partisan loyalists at the expense of the American people."

The buyout, Trump regime officials said, would pay the workers through the end of this fiscal year on September 30, with benefits. But the suit notes there's no guarantee of that. Federal funding runs only through March 14, it notes. And a federal law, the Anti-Deficiency Act, bans paying workers after that if there are no funds available.

UNION SISTERS OF CENTRAL ILLINOIS

Meeting Sponsored by:
Ironworkers Local 112

MEET AND GREET
DRINKS AND BRING A DISH TO PASS!

Monday February 24, 2025
6:00 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Ironworkers Local 112 Hall
3003 N Main • East Peoria
We will be discussing the Garden of Hope Project

For Women who work in non-traditional careers

The Labor Paper offers special rates for local unions subscribing for their members. The cost is \$1.15 per member, per month. This rate can be billed monthly, quarterly or annually. We also have individual subscriptions for \$15/per year.

The Labor Paper has been serving union members in the central Illinois region since 1896. Our subscribers cover a wide bank of central Illinois, including Springfield, Decatur, Bloomington, LaSalle-Peru, Quad Cities, Quincy and Jacksonville. We currently have 10,000 union members as subscribers.

If you have any questions please email: sharon@westcentralbtc.org or call 309-264-1119. Thanks!

FREE CLASSIFIED ADS

For Union Members

Mail coupon to: LABOR Paper, 621 Commercial St #1B, Peoria, IL 61602

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

PHONE _____ UNION _____

Circle Your Ad Category: Automotive Rentals Misc Pets
Recreational Real Estate Services Wanted Employment

Phone

or email ad to: sharon@westcentralbtc.org

Our Classified Ads are free to union members: Please send your for sale items to: sharon@westcentralbtc.org or fill out form at send to: The Labor Paper, 621 Commercial #1B, Peoria, IL 61602. Be sure to include contact information and union affiliation.

This e-newsletter is published by
The Labor Paper
621 Commercial #1B
Peoria, Illinois 61602
309-674-9715
sharon@westcentralbtc.org and sent to local unions for distribution