

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 1, 2018

Chairman Colleen Duffy Kiko
Federal Labor Relations Authority
1400 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20424

Dear Chairman Kiko:

As Senators representing the roughly 250,000 federal employees served by the Boston Regional Office of the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA), we are writing to express our concern over the announcement that the FLRA intends to close its regional offices in Dallas and Boston.

The FLRA is critical to safeguarding the rights of federal employees and ensures that they receive due process under the Civil Service Reform Act. Through its adjudicatory and prosecutorial roles, the FLRA resolves disputes over bargaining units, unfair labor practices, and other matters important to federal employees. The Authority also trains union officers and agency officials to ensure that they know their rights and responsibilities under the law. Critical to this mission is the regional office structure of the FLRA, so that agency staff can build relationships with parties across the country to fulfil the agency's core mission.

Closing regional offices would place FLRA staff farther away from those who rely on their services. Additional harm to the rights of federal employees would likely be compounded by agency efforts to reduce funding for staff travel in order to conduct elections, representational hearings, onsite Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) investigations, and other essential work.

In the FLRA's Congressional Budget Justification for the President's budget request for Fiscal Year 2019, the FLRA proposed closing the Boston Regional Office. However, under the 2018 Consolidated Appropriations Act (the "Omnibus"), that action is prohibited unless approved by Congress following detailed reprogramming reporting by the agency. Specifically, we call your attention to Section 740 of Public Law 115-141, which states:

None of the funds made available in this or any other appropriations Act may be used to increase, eliminate, or reduce funding for a program, project, or activity as proposed in the President's budget request for a fiscal year until such proposed change is subsequently enacted in an appropriation Act, or unless such change is made pursuant to the reprogramming or transfer provisions of this or any other appropriations Act.

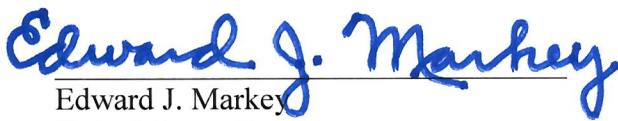
Congress demonstrated support for the current FLRA structure by appropriating level funding to the agency for Fiscal Year 2018. With a two-year budget agreement now in place, federal agencies should focus on delivering the most effective services for their constituencies rather than harmful cuts that will reduce responsiveness.

Therefore, we urge you to immediately cease all planning and execution of the announced office closures and instead allow the Appropriations Committees to review and approve any plans for reorganization, ensuring that such actions are the best use of taxpayer funds.

We ask that you immediately inform us of any decision to submit a reprogramming request pursuant to Public Law 115-141.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to working with you to protect to the rights of federal employees in our states and across the country.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



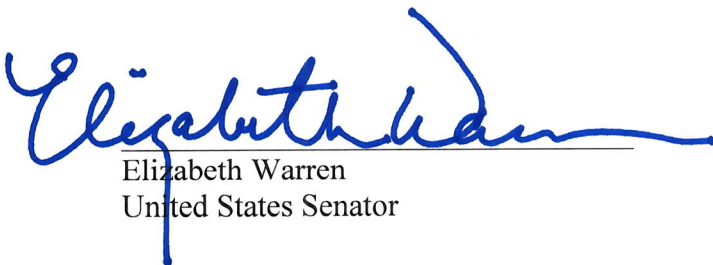
Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



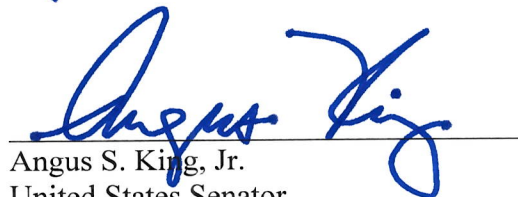
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator

cc:

Member James T. Abbott
Member Ernest DuBester