



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF
PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL ENGINEERS
AFL-CIO & CLC

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**Statement by
IFPTE President Paul Shearon
on
How the Government Shutdown Has Created Long-
Term Damage to Federal Agencies and Workers**

“... the president continues to add real injuries to his insults.”

The current government shutdown has been portrayed by some as an extended vacation for federal workers or as a relatively minor problem since only a fourth of the federal government is furloughed or working without pay. This is not the case. The Trump shutdown is creating long-term damage to federal agencies and harming the dedicated federal employees and their families who are going without pay.

Our union, the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers, represents thousands of highly skilled professionals employed by the federal government who work in a wide range of occupations at the Department of Justice, the EPA, NOAA and NASA. Reports to our union suggest that even if the shutdown ends this week, the damage to federal agencies and their work on behalf of the American people will not be quickly repaired.

For example, roughly 400 Immigration Judges represented by IFPTE at the DOJ are contending with a backlog of 1.1 million cases. Each day that this stalemate over immigration policy stretches on, hundreds of hearings are canceled. Each hearing that gets rescheduled goes to the back of the line. Cases are being pushed back to 2022.



Another example: IFPTE is the largest union at NASA. The 8,000 scientists, engineers and technical workers we represent at the space agency are extremely frustrated by the disruption of their professional and personal lives. Many NASA projects have set timelines, and projects don't get finished when scientists are sitting at home. This is the third shutdown in a year, longer than the other two combined. Our members were given two hours the day after Christmas to clear out their offices.

It's not like these federal workers are being fairly compensated for their work either. President Trump has recommended a 2019 pay freeze through an executive order, and during the shutdown paychecks won't even come. Many of these professionals with advanced degrees are looking at retirement or may seek options in the private sector. It's also become much harder to recruit talent as a result of the president's inaction.

As the head of the administrative branch of government, Donald Trump should be deeply concerned about the morale of his employees, the productivity of government agencies, and the ability of the government to attract and retain the best and the brightest. Instead the president continues to add real injuries to his insults.

Paul Shearon is the President of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers. Across the nation, IFPTE represents 80,000 highly-skilled, workers in both the public and private sectors. The union is an affiliate of the AFL-CIO. More information can be found at www.IFPTE.org.