



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

501 3rd Street, NW, Suite 701, Washington, DC 20001
202-239-4880 • FAX 202-239-4881 • www.ifpte.org

PAUL SHEARON
President

MATTHEW S. BIGGS
Secretary-Treasurer

AREA VICE PRESIDENTS

Gerald Newsome
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
ATLANTIC

Mazen Alsabe
NORTHEAST

Ronda Cockrell
SPEEA

Joel Funfar
SPEEA

Laurence Griffin
WESTERN

Gay Henson
EASTERN FEDERAL

Misty Hughes-Newman
CANADIAN

John Mader
WESTERN

Sean P. McBride
ATLANTIC

Ryan Rule
SPEEA

Dr. Leland S. Stone
WESTERN FEDERAL

Scott Travers
CANADIAN

Gus Vallejo
WESTERN

Tina Zellmer
MIDWESTERN

April 28, 2020

Hon. John Barrasso, Chairman
Environment & Public Works Committee
United States Senate
410 Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Hon. Tom Carper, Ranking Member
Environment & Public Works Committee
United States Senate
456 Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Barrasso & Ranking Senator Carper:

As the Chair and Ranking Member of the Environment & Public Works Committee, and having direct jurisdiction over the federally owned utility, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), we are writing to follow up on our January 30th letter to the Subcommittee on Clean Air & Nuclear Safety regarding the intention of the TVA to outsource hundreds of IT jobs, some which will likely be sent overseas. As we stated in our previous letter, many of the impacted workers are represented by the Engineering Association (EA/IFPTE Local 1937).

This letter is to update you on some information that has come to our attention over the last week and a half. First, we learned that the work is to be contracted out to Capgemini, Accenture and CGI, all companies that have their headquarters based overseas or otherwise outside of the United States. Each of these are well-known IT outsourcing firms whose business model is founded on offshoring as many IT jobs as possible to other nations. Their model also relies heavily on knowledge transfer, whereas the workers that are slated to lose their jobs are required to train their replacements, where most, if not all, are H-1B visa holders employed by IT contractors. The contract workers are then tasked with identifying the IT work that can be offshored, with an eye toward leaving as small a footprint in the United States as possible. The soon-to-be unemployed in-house workers are told that if they do not train their replacements, they could be prematurely laid off, are threatened with lost severance, and/or will not be considered for future employment with their employer. At TVA, our members who are slated to get pink slips were told by management last week to 'take the high road' and 'be professional' as they were preparing for the knowledge transfer portion of losing their jobs.

IFPTE also learned this week that as many as 65 H-1B visa holders have been working at TVA since last year. This is an interesting coincidence in that the offshoring business model described above is heavily dependent on the use of H-1B visa labor, and their hiring is concurrent with TVA's supposed administering of their internal contract decision model process to determine whether or not it was efficient to outsource the IT work. Obviously, it is possible that some of these workers are there to be part of the knowledge transfer for the IT contractors, and/or to do some of the work that would have otherwise been performed by the soon-to-be unemployed federal employees working for the TVA.

As the committee having direct jurisdiction over TVA, we are hopeful that you will now look into what we view as an outsourcing process at TVA that lacks transparency, was done in violation of TVA's own internal contracting processes, will be more costly than simply leaving the work in-house, and is in violation of TVA's own mission of providing an economic boon to the vast Tennessee Valley community. Furthermore, at a time when Congress is approving trillions upon

trillions of dollars aimed at preserving American jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is alarming that TVA, a federal government entity, is permitted to add to our historic unemployment numbers by laying off hundreds of workers with little to no congressional oversight.

IFPTE urges your committee to investigate this matter and strongly consider adding language in the next COVID-19 relief bill preventing TVA from outsourcing these jobs. Unlike saving other American jobs, saving these will not cost taxpayers a dime.

Thank you and we look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



Paul Shearon,
President



Matthew Biggs,
Secretary-Treasurer/
Legislative Director



Gay Henson,
EA/Local 1937 President/
Eastern Federal Area Vice President

Cc: Hon. Donald Trump, President of the United States

