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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RULING TO REMOVE UNION RIGHTS FROM IMMIGRATION JUDGES IS “UNJUST”

Battle to fight flawed decision that remove rights from judges and decertifies the Nat’l Association of Immigration Judges will continue

WASHINGTON – On Election Day, Tues., Nov 3, the Federal Labor Relations Authority [released a decision](#) reclassifying federal Immigration Judges as “management officials” without the right to collective bargaining. While the nation was focused on the presidential election, President Trump’s handpicked members of the FLRA delivered an all-out assault on the rights of Immigration Judges, continuing the administration’s effort to undermine the rights and protections of federal workers.

“In the past month we’ve seen [executive orders which shred civil service protections](#),” said International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers President Paul Shearon. “This outrageous and wrong-headed decision to reclassify Immigration Judges as managers is unjust. The president and his appointees have demonstrated that their agenda is to bully workers and silence them. This does not serve the best interests of federal workers or the American people.”

The nation’s roughly 470 federal Immigration Judges employed by the U.S. Dept. of Justice are represented by IFPTE’s affiliate, the National Association of Immigration Judges.

“The FLRA’s highly politicized and baseless ruling reverses more than two decades of precedent and undermines the real work done in our immigration courts by courageous jurists,” said the NAIJ President **Ashley Tabaddor**, a Los Angeles-based immigration judge. “We handle sensitive matters in our courtrooms everyday – and every day since March, we’ve faced the risk of a deadly pandemic in our workplaces. As important and difficult as that work

is, we are not managers. We don't even have the authority to order pencils, let alone influence or formulate agency policy.”

The FLRA's ill-considered decision overturns the detailed findings of its own Washington DC Regional Director, Jessica Bartlett. The Regional Director [ruled in July](#) that immigration judges are not managers, since they “do not create or influence” policies of the DOJ's Executive Office of Immigration Review (EOIR).

“Sadly, this orchestrated move to take away our right to bargain over safety, security and other workplace issues is just the latest example of attempts to interfere with the independent decision-making authority of federal Immigration Judges,” said Tabaddor. “The current administration has tried to force independent jurists to act as rubber stamps to implement partisan immigration policies.”

IFPTE, in conjunction with NAIJ, is pursuing legal and other options in response to the FLRA's ruling, said Tabaddor. “NAIJ will continue to support immigration judges both individually with management, and also as a group through public outreach, media contacts, and legislative advocacy. This highly politicized decision is compelling evidence in support of our case for the creation of an independent Article 1 immigration court.” NAIJ advocates establishment of U.S. immigration courts under Article 1 of the U.S. Constitution, similar to U.S. Tax courts and U.S Bankruptcy courts to preserve judicial independence and provide fairness to all litigants.

Across the nation, IFPTE represents 80,000 highly-skilled, white-collar 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.

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