



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

501 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, NW, Suite 701, Washington, DC 20001  
202-239-4880 • FAX 202-239-4881 • [www.ifpte.org](http://www.ifpte.org)

**MATTHEW S. BIGGS**  
President

**GAY HENSON**  
Secretary-Treasurer

## AREA VICE PRESIDENTS

**John Mader**  
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT  
WESTERN

**Katie Barrows**  
SOUTHEAST

**Frances Hsieh**  
WESTERN

**Michelle Johnston**  
CANADIAN

**R Matthew Joyce**  
SPEEA

**Joan Mah**  
WESTERN

**Richard Mahé**  
CANADIAN

**Sean P. McBride**  
ATLANTIC

**Renaë McKenzie**  
EASTERN FEDERAL

**Steven Pinto**  
ATLANTIC

**Denise Robinson**  
NORTHEAST

**Ryan Rule**  
SPEEA

**Jamie Uyeunten**  
WESTERN FEDERAL

**Gus Vallejo**  
WESTERN

June 30, 2023

The Honorable Gary C. Peters, Sr.  
Chairman  
Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs Committee  
United States Senate  
724 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C., 20510

The Honorable Rand Paul, M.D.  
Ranking Member  
Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs Committee  
United States Senate  
295 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Peters and Ranking Member Paul:

We write to you as the executive officers of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), a labor union representing upwards of 90,000 employees, including federal employees working at Navy shipyards and depots, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, NASA, Social Security Administration, the Immigration Court, Environmental Protection Agency, NOAA, Department of Energy, Merit Systems Protection Board, and elsewhere. We urge you to move swiftly to advance Nancy A. Speight, President Biden's nominee for Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA), and Suzanne Summerlin, President Biden's nominee for the FLRA General Counsel.

Both the Office of the General Counsel and the Authority play a vital role in assuring federal employees' representation rights, settling disputes between federal employees and federal agencies, and safeguarding the public interest, as stipulated by the Federal Service Labor-Management Statute (or "the Statue"). A functional FLRA is a requirement for achieving high-performing federal workplaces, for innovating approaches that allow federal employees and agencies to partner and advance the agency mission, and for making the federal government a model employer. Unfortunately, the Federal Labor Relation Authority has lacked a Senate-confirmed General Counsel since January 2017 and has had a vacant seat on the Authority since the start of this year. These vacancies not only harm federal employees, but they also result in uncertainty for federal agencies, and hurt the government's ability to deliver services that Americans count on.

Ms. Summerlin is highly qualified to serve as the FLRA General Counsel and understands the responsibilities and function of the Office of the General Counsel (OGC). She possesses extensive knowledge and understanding of the Statue. Ms. Summerlin also has the deep experience that comes from advocating before the Authority and the OGC as a representative of federal employees working for the Department of Defense Education Activity, State Department, Transportation Security Administration, Veterans Administration, U.S. Forest Service, and many other agencies. She is currently Deputy Executive Director and Deputy General Counsel at Federal Education Association-NEA, and before that was the Associate General Counsel at the National Federation of Federal Employees. She is a well-respected expert on federal personnel policy and understands well the importance the OGC plays in

resolving disputes and supporting harmonious labor-management relations in the federal government.

Ms. Speight is currently Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Civilian Personnel Policy, where she oversees personnel policies and programs that affect 950,000 Department of Defense (DoD) federal employees and DoD recruitment and talent retention policies that are critical to the success of DoD and the components within it. She has an extensive career in the federal civil service and in administering federal law that protects federal employees' right to organize, bargain collectively, and choose to participate in labor unions and in ensuring federal employee labor unions and agencies comply with rights and obligations defined by the Statute. Deputy Assistant Secretary Speight was an employee of the FLRA when it began operations on January 1, 1979, and knows firsthand the history and development of the FLRA from its inception. She has held several leadership roles at FLRA over the years, including serving as the Regional Director of the FLRA Atlanta Region and was the author of several of the FLRA's operations and representation manuals. She is highly qualified to serve as a Member of the FLRA and we will provide independent and well-considered reasoning and decision-making on the Authority. We ask the Committee to hold a confirmation hearing promptly and advance her nominations for the term ending on July 1, 2024, and for the term ending on July 1, 2029.

Thank you for considering our request. We are confident both nominees will hit the ground running for their respective positions and we are available to provide further information to support their confirmation. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact IFPTE Legislative Director Faraz Khan at 202-239-4892 or [fkhan@ifpte.org](mailto:fkhan@ifpte.org).

Sincerely,



Matthew S. Biggs  
IFPTE President



Gay Henson  
IFPTE Secretary-Treasurer