

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 13, 2025

President Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington

Dear President Trump,

We write to express serious concerns about your Administration's efforts to target federal employees, particularly those on probationary status. Probationary employees are subject to established federal workforce protections, including adherence to Reduction in Force (RIF) procedures (5 C.F.R. § 351.201(a)(1)). Any attempt to circumvent legal protections by imposing mass terminations would be unprecedented, disruptive, and illegal.

Nationally, there are more than 2.4 million federal workers. Nearly all federal employees are routinely in a probationary period for the first one or two years of service and more than 200,000 of them are on probationary status across the federal government. In New Mexico, there are approximately 2,200 federal employees in their probationary period – including individuals who serve in critical roles across key agencies, including the Veterans Health Administration, the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, among others.

Abruptly terminating these employees without due process would not only undermine the delivery of essential government services but would also have widespread economic consequences for our state. Federal employment is a major contributor to New Mexico's economy, supporting thousands of families and generating significant local revenue. Large-scale firings of probationary employees would ripple through our communities, reducing consumer spending, straining local businesses, and creating unnecessary economic instability.

Immediately terminating probationary employees also risks long-term harm to the federal workforce. Many of these probationary employees represent the next generation of skilled public servants – 27% are under the age of 30 – and they report the highest levels of job engagement across the federal workforce. Signaling that federal employment is unstable and subject to arbitrary dismissal will undermine recruitment and retention efforts, making it harder for agencies to attract and keep the skilled professionals essential to their missions (5 C.F.R. § 351.501).

Concerns have already been raised about the legality of these terminations, noting that mass layoffs without individualized assessments violate existing federal workforce statutes. Federal law permits the termination of probationary employees based on performance or conduct. It does not allow for large-scale firings without individualized assessments or adherence to Reduction in Force procedures. Additionally, it explicitly prohibits dismissing probationary employees for partisan political reasons. Federal agencies must be staffed by qualified professionals, not political loyalists.

Particularly concerning are the potential implications for public safety. Recent reports highlight the Federal Bureau of Investigation's extensive training and reliance on probationary employees, with new agents and support staff actively investigating crimes nationwide. Dismissing these employees could have dire consequences on national security and public safety. Such firings are sure to weaken national security

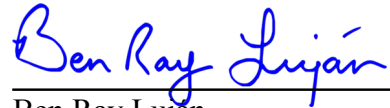
by removing personnel involved in critical investigations. The loss of these agents would leave vital work unfinished and could compromise public safety both in the present and for years to come.

Given all of the above, we urge your Administration to halt any plans for mass firings of probationary employees in New Mexico and across the country.

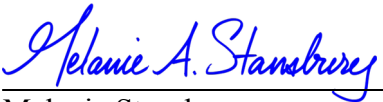
Sincerely,



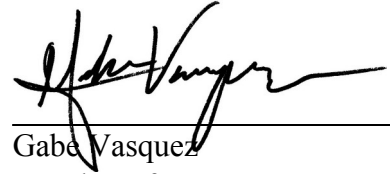
Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



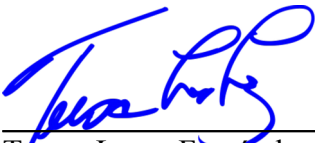
Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



Melanie Stansbury
Member of Congress



Gabe Vasquez
Member of Congress



Teresa Leger Fernandez
Member of Congress