



June 5, 2025

Comments in response to Docket ID: OPM-2025-0004
Regulation Identification Number: 3206-AO80

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The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback on the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM), *Improving Performance, Accountability and Responsiveness in the Civil Service* (RIN: 3206-AO80), issued on April 23, 2025, with a 30-day comment period. As FASEB represents 22 scientific societies and over 100,000 individual researchers within the biological and biomedical sciences, we also appreciate the extension of the comment deadline by an additional 15 days, which allowed us to engage our full governance process in the development of this feedback. In the future, we strongly recommend that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) provide a minimum of 60 days for NPRMs or related requests for information to accommodate review and feedback by the full range of stakeholders potentially affected by these actions.

FASEB has extreme reservations regarding the proposed rule. Framed as a strategy to allow agency supervisors “to strengthen employee accountability and the democratic responsiveness of American government, while addressing longstanding performance management challenges in the Federal workforce,” this proposed rule is akin to applying a tourniquet when a band-aid is likely more appropriate. For example, although the NPRM cites examples of challenges agency leaders face in removing non-performing federal employees who take actions in violation of their oath, it fails to provide actual data indicating the true scope of the problems cited. Attempts to strengthen accountability should be based on evidence-based data-driven decisions.

In addition, text throughout the NPRM refers to a desire to ensure a nonpartisan civil service; however, the proposed strategy, which would allow the President to determine the policy-influencing positions to be reclassified as “Schedule Policy/Career,” is a strategy to penalize these individuals should they question the validity of Presidential directives. Civil servants should not be evaluated based on their fealty to an individual President’s agenda.

The hiring and firing process for policy-influencing positions must support the ability of agencies to recruit and retain the most qualified talent, including subject-matter expertise beyond familiarity with federal policymaking, such as those roles associated with public health and STEM fields. Similarly, as with the pushback on the prior proposal to establish Schedule F, it is unclear how reclassification of a large swath of the federal workforce to a category that would allow for their removal and replacement at the whim of an elected official will improve government efficiency; at best, it creates a work environment based on disruption, chaos, and fear.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide feedback on this proposed regulatory action.

Sincerely,

Beth Garvy, PhD
FASEB President