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May 23, 2018

United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 205015

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the three million members of the National Education Association and the 50 million students they serve, we urge you to **VOTE NO** on the Ross (#162) and Steve King (#22) amendments to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 (H.R. 5515). Votes associated with these issues may be included in NEA's Report Card for the 115th Congress.

The Ross amendment, which requires the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to submit a report to Congress on official time activities by federal employees, could have a chilling effect and deprive educators and other federal employees of pension credit for official time spent on labor-management relations and representing employees. Official time is essential to ensure that federal employees have a voice at the worksite — those who belong to unions as well as those who do not. Employee representatives use official time to address issues such as working conditions and workplace safety; protect employees from discrimination on the basis of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, and other factors unrelated to job performance; and explore training and educational opportunities. The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 prohibits the use of official time for union-specific business such as soliciting members, electing officers, internal meetings, and partisan political activities.

The King amendment would undermine the Davis-Bacon Act, which requires workers to be paid locally prevailing wages on projects funded by the federal government. Prevailing wage calculations are based on typical wages and benefits for workers in a community — those who are union members as well as those who are not. This approach helps ensure that workers can provide food, clothing, shelter, and other necessities for their families, especially children who cannot fend for themselves. In addition to workers and taxpayers, entire communities benefit from projects covered by the Davis-Bacon Act.

We strongly urge you to **VOTE NO** on both the Ross and King amendments because of the adverse impact they would have on children, working families, and their communities.

Sincerely,

Marc Egan
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association