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May 1, 2017

United States Congress
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the three million members of the National Education Association and the 50 million students they serve, in advance of this week's vote we urge you to vote NO on the Working Families Flexibility Act (H.R. 1180). Votes on this issue may be included in NEA's Report Card for the 115th Congress.

This deceptively named bill would hurt, not help, working families. Instead of extra pay for overtime, low-wage workers could receive "comp" time — paid time off. But the employer, not the employee, would decide when time off is granted. There is no guarantee workers could take time off when they need it most — for example, to care for a sick child, attend a parent-teacher conference, help an aging parent, or other attend to other pressing responsibilities. Employers could defer compensation for unused comp time for up to 13 months, a real hardship for low-wage workers who struggle to make ends meet. Employers could also unilaterally decide to "cash out" comp time in excess of 80 hours or discontinue their entire comp time program with just 30 days' notice, leaving employees in the lurch.

In short, in exchange for longer hours at lower pay, workers get the possibility — but no guarantee — of extra time to care for their families or time off when they really need it.

All working people — not just those who spend more than 40 hours a week on the job — need guaranteed access to paid sick days and paid family and medical leave. Too few employers provide these protections now, especially for employees paid by the hour. Again, we urge you to vote NO on the Working Families Flexibility Act and focus instead on truly family-friendly policies that reflect the realities of the 21st century workplace.

Sincerely,

Marc Egan
Director of Government Relations