

ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM
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June 2, 2009

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write to ask you to issue an Executive Order re-establishing the National Partnership Council (the "Council"). In his 1993 Executive Order (No. 12871), former President Bill Clinton recognized the importance of labor-management partnerships for the purpose of identifying problems and crafting solutions in executive agencies to better serve the agencies' customers and missions.

Before former President George W. Bush abolished the Council by Executive Order (No. 13203) early in his presidency, the Council was comprised of the directors of executive agencies, as well as representatives from union and management groups. The Council advised the President on matters involving labor-management relations, and acted as liaisons between the Council and agency employees. The head of each agency was further directed to "create labor-management partnerships by forming labor-management committees or councils," including union representatives, employees and management working as partners to more efficiently meet the agencies' missions and to better serve the taxpayers.

Union leaders with whom we have spoken agree that the labor-management partnership recognized the importance of employees and their employee representatives to smooth, collegial decision-making in the government. Moreover, the Council served the essential purpose of maintaining communication between the heads of executive agencies and the President to better serve the public.

More recently, after meeting with union leaders shortly after she took office, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator, Lisa Jackson, announced that the agency will reinstate its partnership after the eight-year lapse. (See, *Washington Post*, April 15, 2009, "Labor-Management Partnerships Poised to Revive.") In addition, John Berry, the new Director of the Office of Personnel Management testified before the federal workforce

subcommittee, in response to a question, that he is interested in reestablishing the partnership. We hope that you agree that the time is ripe to reestablish the Labor-Management Partnership here in the federal government.

In light of your commitment to strengthening executive agencies, we believe that an Obama executive order will go far in helping to achieve your stated goals.

Sincerely,



Edolphus Towns,
Chair



Stephen F. Lynch,
Chair, Subcommittee on
Federal Workforce, Postal Service
and District of Columbia



Eleanor Holmes Norton,
Member of Congress