



# Pennsylvania Conference of Teamsters

**Strength in Numbers 95,000**

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## LEGISLATIVE ACTION ALERT

### Judges Side With Trump Administration In Bid To Weaken Federal Unions

**The decision by a three-judge panel keeps alive a batch of executive orders that unions have been fighting.**

**HUFFPOST**© By [Dave Jamieson](#)

According to a report by Huffpost©, A federal appeals panel delivered a stinging setback to unions representing government workers on Tuesday, overruling a decision last year that had blocked three controversial executive orders by the Trump administration. The trio of orders was meant to weaken unions' clout and make it easier for agencies to fire federal employees. But a judge ruled last August that the White House had exceeded its powers by issuing them, effectively putting the orders on ice. Unions had celebrated that decision at the time, saying it blocked the White House from moving forward with what they said were unfair and illegal policies. But a three-judge panel with the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia overturned that decision Tuesday, saying the lower court did not have jurisdiction to rule on the matter.

The ruling by the appeals panel makes it likely the litigation will drag on much longer, with the White House free in the meantime to pursue the aims of its executive orders. The American Federation of Government Employees, the lead plaintiff in the lawsuit, called it a "terrible decision" that enables "union-busting."

"The decision is mistaken about the jurisdictional question, wrong on the law, and jeopardizes the rights of federal employees across the government,"

the union's president, J. David Cox, said in a statement. "We will fight this decision using every legal tool available to us." Trump's executive orders would speed up the timeline for unions and agencies to negotiate contracts and reduce the amount of time that a worker had to improve performance before being fired. They would also cut down on what's known as "official time": hours that union representatives can devote to union-related issues while on government time.

Unions argued that the order ran afoul of their collective bargaining rights, a claim that U.S. District Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson largely agreed with. Her decision stated that the administration could not unilaterally make such changes without consulting the unions at the bargaining table. But the appeals panel ended up siding with the White House, saying any such conflicts had to go through the Federal Labor Relations Authority, the agency that referees labor disputes in the federal government. As HuffPost reported in June, that agency has been issuing management-friendly decisions now that it's headed by officials chosen by the Trump administration. Paul Shearon, president of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers, said "the fight isn't over" in light of Tuesday's ruling.

"The intent of Congress, to enable free collective bargaining for federal workers, is clear and unambiguous," Shearon said in a statement. "We'll consider every option available to uphold the law and exercise our rights."

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