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CITY OF SAN DIEGO JOINS LAWSUIT CHALLENGING UNLAWFUL FEDERAL EMPLOYEE TERMINATIONS THAT THREATEN LOCAL JOBS AND SERVICES

SAN DIEGO – The City of San Diego joined in the filing of an amicus brief alongside 42 local governments, government officials, and organizations opposing the unlawful termination of tens of thousands of federal employees under a directive issued by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM). The mass firings, conducted without due process and under false pretenses of poor performance, not only violate federal employment laws but also poses a direct threat to San Diego’s economy, workforce, and public services.

The amicus brief filed last Tuesday, supports a legal challenge, brought by unions representing the workers who were fired and several non-profit organizations, to OPM’s directive, which ordered federal agencies to terminate all probationary employees except those considered “mission critical.” According to the amended complaint, OPM lacks the legal authority to impose these terminations, and its directive violates the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) and other federal employment protections.

On March 13, 2025, the court granted the Plaintiffs’ request for a preliminary injunction, temporarily halting OPM’s directive at the Departments of Veteran Affairs, Agriculture, Interior, Energy, Defense, and Treasury. OPM has since appealed the decision to the Ninth Circuit in an attempt to overturn the injunction and move ahead with its plan. However, this ruling prevents any further terminations of employees while the case moves forward.

San Diego is home to thousands of federal employees who provide essential services across multiple agencies, including defense, healthcare, and public safety. The indiscriminate firing of probationary employees in federal agencies with a strong presence in San Diego, such as the Department of Veterans Affairs, the U.S. Navy, and the Social Security Administration, will have immediate consequences for local workers, their families, and the critical services they provide.

“The consequences of these mass firings extend beyond those who lost their jobs. They impact veterans, seniors, military families, and countless others in our community who rely on the services these federal employees provide,” said City Attorney Heather Ferbert. **“We are joining this amicus brief to push back against an unlawful and unjustified attack on workers who serve the public and to protect the integrity of federal employment practices.”**

The sudden, large-scale purge of federal workers, conducted without proper justification, due process, or performance evaluations, undermines San Diego's local workforce and disrupts public services that support veterans, families, and communities.

The amended complaint seeks injunctive relief to prevent OPM from enforcing its directive, which includes OPM stop terminations of probationary employees, rescind the prior unlawful terminations of probationary employees, stop requiring federal employees to report to OPM, and take no action against any employee who fails to respond to OPM's instructions to report.

The lawsuit and amicus brief were filed in the United States District Court for the Northern District of California. The case is American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO; American Federation of State and County Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO, et al v. United States Office of Personnel Management et al., U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, Case No. 3:25-cv-01780-WHA.

The full amended complaint and amicus brief are attached.

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