



Ottawa, On  
January 14th, 2019

J. David Cox, National President  
American Federal Government Employees  
80 F Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
(202) 639-6490 (fax)

I am writing to you on behalf of the Association of Justice Counsel (AJC), which represents over 2,600 federal public service lawyers who proudly serve Canadians, to express our solidarity with your members and all the US federal employees affected by the shutdown.

It has now been more than three weeks since the US government was shut down, locking out almost 400,000 federal workers and forcing another 400,000 deemed “essential” to show up to work without pay. Many of these federal government workers, your members, are now being held hostage in a partisan political game. As you know, it is illegal to require workers to work without paying them and a violation of the International Labour Organization’s Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105) which the USA has ratified. We stand in solidarity with our American counterparts and fully support the AFGE in its efforts to end this shutdown and ensure that their members are made whole.

We applaud the legal action you have taken against the shutdown. We have a special sympathy for the plight of your members as our members and the majority of Canadian federal employees understand all too well the often devastating consequences of working without pay since the disastrous Phoenix pay system was put in place here in 2015. Our members know what it means to have no income and many have experienced missed paychecks and incorrect calculations of entitlements and benefits.

All employees have the right to be treated fairly and with respect by their employer. We stand united with our American union brethren as you fight to defend your members and encourage all federal workers to support their unions as they seek to defend legitimate interests.

In Solidarity,

Ursula Hendel, President