

**SSA GENERAL COMMITTEE
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO**

Representing over 50,000 SSA employees across the nation, Puerto Rico and Pacific Islands

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September 22, 2011

Joseph Schimansky, Executive Director
Federal Service Impasses Panel
1400 K Street, NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20424-0001

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RE: American Federation of Government
Employees, AFL-CIO and Social Security
Administration

Case No. 11 FSIP _____

Dear Mr. Schimansky:

This is to request the assistance of the Panel in a collective bargaining impasse between the above parties. Negotiations began December 1, 2009 and are essentially stalled with no expectation of closure without the Panel's assistance. That is the case even though the parties have had extensive assistance from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, have met regularly for almost two years, and have had before them the subjects in the most recent National Agreement and proposed new Articles, plus numerous midterm impasse issues which the Panel referred to the National Agreement negotiations. Substantial progress is fundamentally lacking, with only 13 Articles having been signed off (Appendix #1), even though the parties have been in negotiations for 20 sessions (40 weeks) totaling 160 days. Therefore, the parties are impassed on the remaining 43+ Articles (Position and Articles In Dispute).

The mediator who has been working with the parties is: Commissioner Gary Eder, FMCS Baltimore Field Office, 7240 Parkway Drive, Suite 450, Hanover, MD 21076, telephone 410 712-4031 (office) and 443 623-1829 (mobile), geder@fmcs.gov. The parties have been under his jurisdiction during the most recent 8 sessions (16 weeks), and he is fully aware of the chronic lack of progress in process and results coming out of the negotiations.

The Chief Negotiator for the Agency is: Kenneth Powell, Deputy Regional Commissioner, c/o OLMER, 2170 Annex Building, 6401 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, MD 21235, telephone 410 965-4741, Kenneth.Powell@ssa.gov).

The Chief Negotiator for AFGE is: Witold Skwierczynski, c/o AFGE Council 220, P.O. Box 47638, Baltimore, MD 20144, telephone 410 965-8863, wskw@afgeglobal.net.


The most recent National Agreement was implemented in 2005 and expired in August 2009. It covers approximately 50,000 bargaining unit members.

In the Union's Statement of Position for each disputed Article, we have identified and summarized some major issues that are in dispute. There are additional issues in the Articles; however, effectively addressing them without the Panel's assistance is a problem because of the general failure of the process thus far.

An issue that recurs in several Articles involves the Union's designation of its representatives, including but not limited to those who are not current SSA employees. The Union is proposing that it be able to designate such individuals as it determines to be appropriate, subject to the same security procedures as apply to SSA employees. Articles which are affected by this issue will likely include Article 3 (Employee Rights), Articles 4 and 5, dealing with midterm bargaining, Article 11 (Facilities and Communications), and Article 30 (Official Time). This is fundamentally an issue of access to employees, which is the functional definition of a union representative; the Agency is attempting to interfere with that right.

For the foregoing reasons, AFGE requests that the Panel assert jurisdiction over the impasse and direct the parties to a concentrated period of mediation by FMCS; at the end of that phase, we further request that the Panel direct the parties to a mediated factfinding process in which the Panel assists the parties to resolve any remaining issues.

Sincerely,


Witold Skwierczynski
Chief Negotiator

John Gage, President
American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO