



(April 18, 2016)

In order to further improve the lines of communication and to respond to the concerns between the National VA Council and you our members, I have established a National VA Council Briefing. This NVAC Briefing will bring you the latest news and developments within DVA and provide you with the current status of issues this Council is currently addressing. I believe that this NVAC Briefing will greatly enhance the way in which we communicate and the way in which we share new information, keeping you better informed.

Alma L. Lee

National VA Council, President

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**In This Briefing:** Bill to Require OPM to Report Annually on Official Time Moves Ahead

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The use of “official time” by federal employees who are representing a union has been little noticed outside of human resources or labor relations offices within the federal government.

That lack of recognition has been changing as there is movement in Congress to learn more about how much time is used by federal employees who are paid their full salary and benefits while representing a union. A bill has now been referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union. The bill, as amended, would also require additional information on the amount of space provided for union activities by federal employees as well.

The bill that has been reported to the Committee of the Whole House is [HR 4392](#) with a recommendation for further consideration. (The bill is available at the end of this article.)

The bill would require the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to provide, at a minimum, the following information to Congress on a yearly basis:

- The total amount of official time granted to employees.
- The average amount of official time expended per bargaining unit employee.
- The specific types of activities or purposes for which official time was granted, and the impact which the granting of such official time for such activities or purposes had on agency operations.
- The total number of employees to whom official time was granted, and, of that total, the number who were not engaged in any activities or purposes except activities or purposes involving the use of official time.
- The total amount of compensation (including fringe benefits) afforded to employees in connection with activities or purposes for which they were granted official time.
- A description of any room or space designated at the agency (or its subcomponent) where official time activities will be conducted, including the square footage of any such room or space.

The movement of the bill on official time comes after the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee sent letters to federal agencies in February asking for information from a number of agencies requesting data such as names and salaries of federal employees using official time for union activities. (See [House Committee Fires Off Letters Demanding Data on Federal Employees' Use of 'Official Time'](#))

While relatively few bills pass through a committee to the full House, the bill is still only given a 21% chance of final passage into law.

Please click on link below to review the purposed bill

[Bill to Require Annual Report to Congress on Official Time](#)