



Protecting Montana's wildlife, land, waters, and  
hunting & fishing heritage for future generations.

February 5, 2025

Dear Senator Steve Daines, Senator Tim Sheehy, Representative Ryan Zinke, Representative Troy Downing,

As concerned constituents, we are writing to you about the vital role that career public agency employees play in our government. We are alarmed by the recent unwarranted attacks on these dedicated professionals by unelected persons who have somehow been allowed to begin to dismember the United States government. Our concerns are serious, and we urge you to protect these invaluable individuals and the government agencies we depend on.

Career public agency employees are the backbone of our federal government. They work tirelessly to implement policies authorized by Congress, provide essential services, and ensure the smooth functioning of our democratic institutions. These individuals dedicate their careers to non-partisan public service no matter what administration is in power, and they often forgo higher-paying opportunities in the private sector because they believe in the importance of serving our nation and its citizens.

With the new administration, there has been a troubling level of criticism and attack on these dedicated professionals. These attacks include public statements that undermine their integrity, efforts to politicize their work, and weakening job protections, safeguarding their ability to perform their duties impartially. Such actions jeopardize the effective functioning of our government and destroy employee morale.

The most concerning aspect of these attacks is an organized effort to destroy the merit-based system that underpins the hiring and retaining public agency professionals. The merit system ensures that individuals are selected based on their qualifications, experience, and ability to perform their duties effectively. It is carefully designed to prevent nepotism, favoritism, and political interference in the staffing of our federal agencies. Undermining this system and transforming the civil service into a partisan political force poses a significant threat to the competence and impartiality of our government.

The politicization of career public agency employees' work is wrong. These professionals are expected to carry out their duties impartially, regardless of the political climate or the party in power. When their work is politicized, it compromises their ability to serve the public effectively and erodes public trust in our institutions. For over a hundred years, the U.S. government has functioned using the principle that public service should be free from political interference and that career employees should be able to perform their duties without fear of retribution or undue political

influence.

The attacks on career public agency employees also have far-reaching consequences for recruiting and retaining talent in our federal workforce. Talented individuals will be deterred from pursuing public service careers if they perceive their dedication and hard work will be met with hostility and partisan attacks. This will lead to a brain drain, where the best and brightest opt for careers in the private sector or other fields, leaving our government agencies understaffed and less effective.

You must take immediate action to address these concerns and protect the integrity of our career public agency employees. We urge you to advance the following steps:

- 1. Reaffirm the Importance of the Merit System:** Publicly affirm your commitment to the merit-based system that ensures the fair and impartial selection of federal employees based only on their knowledge and professional experience in their selected jobs. Advocate for policies that strengthen and uphold this system, preventing political interference in the hiring and promotion processes.
- 2. Defend the Impartiality of Public Service:** Stand against efforts to politicize the work of career public agency employees. Support measures that protect these professionals from undue political influence and ensure they can carry out their duties without fear of retribution.
- 3. Promote a Positive Work Environment:** Advocate for policies that foster a positive and supportive work environment for federal employees. This includes ensuring they have access to necessary resources, training, and protections from political threats and interference to perform their duties effectively.
- 4. Conduct Appropriate Oversight:** Use your oversight authority to investigate and address instances of unfair treatment, retaliation, termination or political interference of career public agency employees. Hold publicly accountable those who engage in such actions and ensure that appropriate measures are taken to prevent federal career employee positions from becoming political positions that result in inappropriate actions.

In conclusion, career public agency employees are essential to the effective functioning of our government. They deserve our respect, support, and protection as they carry out their duties to serve the public. We urge you to take a public stand against the current attacks on these dedicated professionals and to advocate for policies that uphold the principles of merit, impartiality, and integrity in our non-partisan public service employees.



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Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. We look forward to your detailed written response to our concerns for our career public agency employees and their important work for our nation. We want to know what you will do to stand up for our valued public employees and agencies against political threats and interference.

On behalf of the Board and membership of the Montana Wildlife Federation,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light gray background. The signature is cursive and appears to read "Chris Servheen".

Christopher Servheen, Ph.D.  
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