



SENIOR
EXECUTIVES
ASSOCIATION

The voice of career federal executives since 1980

Career Leaders Provide Value for Presidents, and Must Stand Tall in this Moment

Since Inauguration Day, the federal workforce has experienced great uncertainty about their status as key partners in helping the new Administration achieve the collective interests of the American people. Most career government leaders demonstrate high character, integrity, and possess unmatched experience that is invaluable to the incoming Administration's ability to effectively fulfill its priorities. Historically, the support that new Presidential Administrations have received from career staff have helped them to understand how best to develop and implement their priorities in ways that are effective, efficient, and legally sound. Conversely, there are many examples over time where new Administration political officials have not achieved their goals because they did not include career senior leaders in their efforts.

In this context, recent executive orders have [claimed](#) that career members of the Senior Executive Service (SES) are constitutional officers who must serve at-will and at the pleasure of the president. [SEA disagrees](#) with this interpretation of the law, which is inconsistent with the Civil Service Reform Act and multiple other statutes regarding the Federal civil service laws. Further actions have been taken to politicize the civil service more broadly, to include but not limited to the creation of the new Schedule F designation as "Policy/Career", and specific terminations of leaders being taken across the federal government. Approximately, 2.3 million Americans have raised their hand and sworn an oath to defend the United States of America and uphold the Constitution. They should be considered allies and not enemies of incoming Administrations, and respected and treated as such.

The Administration's action to offer federal employees a path to resign their positions and waive their legal rights through the "Fork in the Road" deferred retirement program has introduced confusion across the federal workforce. Its deployment has been disruptive and adversely impactful for many. The lack of up-front guidance that addresses myriad concerns about this program, and ongoing efforts to rapidly respond, have not inspired confidence and credibility among those being impacted. As career SES and other senior leaders work with their staffs to review options related to this initiative before the February 6, 2025, deadline, know that the Senior Executives Association (SEA) appreciates your career dedication and commitment to public service. SEA encourages the federal workforce to continue serving the American people to the best of your abilities during this austere moment in time.

Since 1980, the SEA has been the voice of the SES corps and other career government executives. Now, when so much is being done to constrain your voices, SEA welcomes senior, rising and aspiring leaders to lean in and assist

us in advocating for an effective, nonpartisan federal government for all Americans. One that values, appreciates and respects career civil servants. SEA has compiled a library of resources and information for federal employees which is available on our website. [2025 Presidential Transition](#). If you would like to suggest additional materials for SEA to share or want to flag an issue to the Association's attention, you can always reach us at Action@seniorexecs.org.

Marcus L. Hill

President, SEA

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The Senior Executives Association (SEA) is a professional association representing Senior Executive Service members and other career Federal leaders. Founded in 1980, SEA's goals are to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity of the Federal government; to advance the professionalism and advocate the interests of career Federal executives; and to enhance public recognition of their contributions.

For more information, visit www.seniorexecs.org.