

# HONOR THE DEAL WE MADE

This country is supposed to run on trust. The worker shows up, and they trust the wages show up. The veteran signs the contract, and they trust the country will honor it. The retiree pays in their whole life, and they trust the check arrives. Right now, that trust is being broken. This part of the plan is about restoring it.

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## BRIEF 1.1

# Bargaining Rights and the Loyalty Test

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING

If you work at Aberdeen Proving Ground, or Perry Point VA, or any federal office in MD-01, you probably have a union contract. That contract is why you have grievance rights, predictable schedules, fair pay scales, and a way to fight back if a supervisor treats you wrong. Roughly 950,000 federal workers across the country have these protections.

In April 2025, the President signed an executive order tearing the contracts up. Executive Order 14251 declared most federal agencies "national security agencies." That designation, under existing law, exempts an agency from collective bargaining requirements. The actual purpose, according to the federal judge who later ruled on it, was retaliating against the unions for opposing the President.

Federal employee unions sued. Six of them in the lead case, representing roughly 800,000 workers covered by the executive order: AFGE, AFSCME, NAGE-SEIU, NFFE-IAM, NNU, and SEIU.

In June 2025, a federal judge in California issued a preliminary injunction. He found the executive order was likely unconstitutional retaliation under the First Amendment. The contracts were ordered restored. In February 2026, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals lifted that injunction, clearing the path for agencies to keep stripping bargaining rights while the underlying case continues at trial.

That ruling is part of why the agencies have kept cheating.

The VA Secretary, in March 2026, secretly re-terminated the AFGE master contract that covers 320,000 VA employees. He did it the night before a court hearing where he was supposed to prove to a federal judge in Rhode Island that he had restored the contract. The judge, Melissa DuBose, found out the next morning when she walked into court. She used the words "blatant disrespect for not just this court's order, but for the rule of law." She started the process to hold the VA in contempt. The VA backed down and put the contract back on paper. In practice, court filings since show the VA is still ignoring the contract day-to-day.

That is just one agency. The Department of Homeland Security, the Treasury, the Department of Energy, and the IRS have all been doing some version of the same thing.

There is a separate fight running in parallel called Schedule F. That is the proposal to reclassify career federal workers, the people who run the day-to-day work of the country, into a status with weaker civil service protections. Once reclassified, they can be fired for what the administration calls "political disloyalty." Four federal lawsuits are trying to stop it. One of them, PEER v. Trump, is in U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland.

Andy Harris voted against the bill that would have ended this. H.R. 2550, the Protect America's Workforce Act, would have nullified the executive order and restored collective bargaining rights by statute. The bill passed the House 231 to 195 on December 11, 2025, with twenty Republicans crossing over. Andy Harris voted Nay.

## WHAT THIS MEANS AT HOME

NFFE Local 178 and Local 476 are at Aberdeen Proving Ground. Their members are your neighbors in Bel Air, Aberdeen, Edgewood, and Joppatowne. Local 178 represents Army Contracting Command employees. Local 476 represents the engineers and technical staff at CECOM and the C5ISR Center.

AFGE Local 331 represents Perry Point VA Medical Center employees in Cecil County. These are the nurses, social workers, claims processors, and medical technicians who care for veterans.

If the executive orders stand and the legislation does not pass, your neighbor at Aberdeen can be reassigned, demoted, or fired without the protections that have been federal law for decades. If Schedule F is implemented, the same neighbor can be fired for refusing a political loyalty test.

Maryland lost roughly 25,000 federal jobs in 2025, the most of any state. About 10,300 were lost in October and November alone, during the 43-day government shutdown that Andy Harris and the Freedom Caucus helped force. MD-01 took a major share of those losses. Harford County alone has 43 federal workers per 1,000 residents, the highest concentration outside the DC suburbs.

## MY TAKE

Federal workers should not lose their contracts because the President is angry at their unions. Career civil servants should not be fired for refusing political loyalty tests. These are baseline expectations of how a functioning government treats the people who run it.

## OUR PLAN

### *In Congress*

Cosponsor the Protect America's Workforce Act (H.R. 2550). The bill already passed the House. The work is on the Senate path, partnering with Senators Van Hollen and Alsobrooks and the bipartisan coalition led by Representatives Golden and Fitzpatrick.

Cosponsor the Saving the Civil Service Act (H.R. 492). This is the Schedule F fix. It is currently stuck in the House Oversight Committee while the chair refuses to schedule a markup. The work is public pressure on the chair, including a public letter and floor statements, until it moves.

Vote yes on every roll call tied to these bills, including procedural votes. No "Present" votes on labor protections.

Join the Federal Workforce Caucus.

### *In the District*

A dedicated caseworker for federal workforce issues, in the district office. RIF appeals (federal layoff appeals), contract grievances, retirement disputes. Federal workers in MD-01 should not have to navigate this alone.

Site visits to NFFE Locals 178 and 476 at Aberdeen, AFGE Local 331 at Perry Point, and the Eastern Shore VA clinics at Cambridge and Pocomoke.

An MD-01 Federal Workforce Summit, hosted at Aberdeen. The summit brings NFFE, AFGE, NTEU, IFPTE, and SEIU locals into one room with the district office staff. The point is to keep the line of communication open, not to make a speech.

### *Through Oversight*

Public hearings on contract terminations at the VA, DHS, OPM, and Treasury. Named officials, named breaches. The point is to put the Cabinet officials who broke the law on the record about how they did it.

Amicus briefs in the active Schedule F litigation, including PEER v. Trump in the District of Maryland.

Public letters to OPM and individual Cabinet departments demanding compliance with court orders.

## THE HONEST PART

H.R. 2550 cannot pass the Senate without filibuster reform or a 60-vote bipartisan coalition. Neither is realistic in the current Senate. Until the Senate composition changes, the work is amendments, oversight, and public pressure to keep the issue alive. Pretending otherwise would be a lie.

H.R. 492 cannot leave the House Oversight Committee while the current chair refuses to schedule it. The work is external pressure and limiting damage from executive action.

The four Schedule F lawsuits may resolve before or after the legislation. Win or lose in court, the legislative fix is still needed. A court ruling can be reversed by the next administration. A statute cannot.

## RECEIPTS

### BILLS

- H.R. 2550, Protect America's Workforce Act. Sponsored by Rep. Jared Golden (D-ME) and Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA). House passed 231-195 on December 11, 2025 (Roll Call 332). **Andy Harris voted Nay.** Senate companion: S. 2837 (Sen. Murkowski cosponsoring). [congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/2550](https://congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/2550)
- H.R. 492, Saving the Civil Service Act. Sponsored by Rep. Connolly (D-VA), Rep. Fitzpatrick (R-PA), Rep. Mfume (D-MD), Rep. Bacon (R-NE). Stuck in House Oversight Committee. [congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/492](https://congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/492)

### COURT CASES

- AFGE et al. v. Trump (3:25-cv-03698, N.D. Cal.). EO 14251 challenge. Preliminary injunction granted June 24, 2025. 9th Circuit lifted the injunction in February 2026. Trial proceeding.
- AFGE v. VA (1:25-cv-00583, D.R.I.). Reinstatement of the master collective bargaining agreement. Preliminary injunction granted March 13, 2026. VA secretly re-terminated the contract March 26, 2026. Judge Melissa DuBose threatened contempt March 27, 2026.
- PEER v. Trump (8:25-cv-00260, D. Md.). Schedule F challenge in Maryland federal court.
- NTEU v. Trump (1:25-cv-00170, D.D.C.). Schedule F challenge.

## SOURCES

- House Clerk vote tally, Roll Call 332, 119th Congress: [clerk.house.gov/Votes/2025332](https://clerk.house.gov/Votes/2025332)
- Government Executive, "Blatant disrespect": Judge contemplates contempt proceedings after VA re-terminated union contract" (March 2026)
- Federal News Network, "VA re-terminates AFGE contract for 300K employees, despite court order to restore it"
- AFGE press release, contempt warning
- Government Executive, "House passes bill nullifying Trump's anti-union EOs" (December 2025)
- Maryland Governor's Office, federal job loss totals (2025)

## PARTNERS

NFFE National and Locals 178 (Army Contracting Command, Aberdeen) and 476 (CECOM/C5ISR, Aberdeen). AFGE District 14 and Local 331 (Perry Point VA). NTEU. AFL-CIO Maryland State and DC. Federal Workers Alliance. Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER).

## BRIEF 1.2

# The Triple Hit: Pay, Health, Retirement

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING

A federal employee right now is fighting on three fronts: pay, health, and retirement. Their paycheck has been frozen, their health insurance premiums have jumped double digits two years running, and the retirement benefit they were promised was almost cut last spring by a one-vote House bill that their own congressman let pass.

### The pay freeze.

The President's FY27 budget proposed a zero percent civilian pay raise. The military got 7%. The House appropriations bill omitted any civilian pay raise language entirely. If it passes as-is, the freeze becomes statute.

### Health benefits.

Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) premiums jumped 12.3% on average for 2026, on top of 13.5% for 2025. Back-to-back double-digit hikes. For retirees, who pay post-tax (not pre-tax like active employees), the bite is worse. Some plans saw enrollee-share increases up to 99%. OPM also terminated coverage for gender-affirming care for 2026. And it is pushing further benefit erosion through "well care" cost-cutting, including ending cash incentives for childhood vaccines.

### Retirement.

The House Oversight Committee's first draft of the May 2025 reconciliation bill (H.R. 1) included \$50.9 billion in cuts to federal-postal retirement over ten years. Three of the biggest pieces (raising Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) contributions from 0.8% to 4.4%, switching the pension formula from high-3 to high-5, and an at-will employment coercion provision for new federal hires) were stripped from the bill before it reached the House floor, after pressure from federal employee unions and advocacy groups.

What was left in the version that came up for a House vote: elimination of the FERS supplement (the bridge payment from retirement age to Social Security eligibility at 62) for new federal retirees starting January 2028. CBO scored the surviving cut at \$10 billion over ten years.

H.R. 1 passed the House by one vote: 215 to 214. Andy Harris voted Present. He was the only member of the House to do so. His own social media post said he voted Present "to move the bill along."

The Senate stripped the FERS supplement provision before the bill became law on July 4, 2025. Andy Harris was not part of defeating those cuts. The same proposals are expected to return in the next reconciliation cycle.

## WHAT THIS MEANS AT HOME

A GS-12 engineer at Aberdeen Proving Ground takes home roughly \$90,000 a year before taxes. Here is what the federal worker squeeze looks like at their kitchen table right now.

- The FY27 pay freeze costs them roughly \$2,500 to \$3,500 in lost cost-of-living raise.
- The FEHB premium increase costs them another \$30 to \$50 per month per household, every month.

Combined: roughly \$3,000 to \$4,000 a year out of pocket for the same job and the same family budget.

That is what is happening now. What almost happened: the full \$50.9 billion gut of federal retirement that the House Oversight Committee originally drafted. If the original bill had passed, the same GS-12 engineer would have been out roughly \$6,000 to \$9,000 a year, plus a worse retirement waiting at the end. Andy Harris's Present vote on the stripped-down version was what got the bill across the House by a single vote, and the Senate then stripped the remaining FERS supplement cut before final passage. The same proposals are expected to return in the next reconciliation cycle.

For federal retirees on the Eastern Shore (Salisbury, Cambridge, Easton, all retirement-destination towns), the FEHB premium hike is a direct cut to a fixed income. A retiree paying \$300 a month for FEHB now pays \$337. That is \$444 a year, gone.

For the GS-7 in Cecil County who was hoping to retire at 57 under the FERS supplement: that bridge payment was almost taken away. The \$1,000 to \$2,000 a month cushion was set to evaporate for new retirees starting in 2028 if H.R. 1 had become law as the House passed it. The Senate stripped the cut. The proposal will return.

This is happening at every kitchen table in MD-01 where someone works for the federal government.

## MY TAKE

The country signed a deal with federal workers. The deal said: we trust you to do the work, and you trust us to make the pay, the health insurance, and the retirement worth your time. Two of those three benefits are eroding right now. The third was nearly cut in May 2025 by a one-vote House bill that Andy Harris had the chance to stop with a single Nay vote and instead voted Present. The Senate removed the cut before final passage, and the same proposals are expected to return in the next reconciliation cycle.

## OUR PLAN

### *In Congress*

Cosponsor any bill restoring the FERS supplement, reversing the contribution hike, and protecting the high-3 pension formula. House Democrats introduced a 4.1% federal pay raise for FY27 (3.1% base, 1.0% locality) in February 2026. Cosponsor that.

Vote yes on every roll call to restore federal retirement, pay, and benefits. Procedural votes count. No "Present" votes.

Demand cost-of-living parity. Civilian federal workers should not be given a zero raise in years when the military gets 7%, or in years when Congress votes itself a raise.

Use the appropriations process to block OPM's "well care" cuts, the gender-affirming care termination, and the proposed claims-data privacy rollback.

## *In the District*

The federal workforce caseworker in the district office (the same one named in Brief 1.1) handles retirement disputes, FEHB appeals, and pay-related grievances. Listening sessions at Aberdeen, Perry Point, and the Eastern Shore VA clinics specifically about the kitchen-table math: pay, health, and retirement.

A specific outreach push to federal retirees on the Eastern Shore. They are the most isolated and most affected by FEHB premium hikes. A dedicated district office contact for retiree benefit issues.

## *Through Oversight*

Public hearings on OPM's FEHB rulemaking, including the gender-affirming care termination and the claims-data privacy rollback. Get the OPM Director on the record about who benefits and who pays.

Public letters to the Speaker and the Appropriations chair demanding a civilian pay raise in the FY27 spending bill.

Committee inquiry into the at-will employment coercion provision. Who designed it. Who pushed for it. Whose interest does it serve.

## THE HONEST PART

A pay raise for federal workers is not on this Congress's priority list. The House majority will not bring it up. The work is keeping the issue in the news, making sure constituents know who blocked it, and being ready when the political math changes.

The FERS supplement cut almost became law in 2025. The Senate stripped it from H.R. 1 before final passage, which is the only reason the cut is not in effect right now. The proposals are expected to return in the next reconciliation cycle, including the FERS contribution hike, the high-5 pension switch, and the at-will employment coercion provision that were stripped before the May House floor vote. The work is making sure they do not pass next time, and protecting the workers already in the system.

The FEHB premium hikes are set by carrier negotiations, not by Congress directly. The federal government's share is what Congress controls. Restoring it to keep premiums affordable is a budget fight, not a single bill.

Pretending any of this is fixable in two years would be dishonest. What we can do is make sure the federal workers in MD-01 know who is fighting for them and who is letting it happen.

## RECEIPTS

### BILLS

- H.R. 1, One Big Beautiful Bill Act (May 2025 reconciliation). Roll Call 145, May 22, 2025. Passed 215-214-1. **Andy Harris voted Present**, the only member of the House to do so.
- H.R. 493, FAIR Act. 4.3% federal employee pay raise for 2026 (FY26). Sponsor: Rep. Connolly (D-VA). Stalled in committee.
- House Democratic FY27 pay raise legislation, introduced February 2026. 4.1% raise (3.1% base, 1.0% locality). No movement in GOP-controlled House.

## ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

- OPM call letter to FEHB carriers, March 31, 2026. Directs MAHA-style cost cuts. Ends gender-affirming care coverage for 2026 (full elimination in 2027).
- OPM proposed Reduction in Force rule, March 5, 2026 (Federal Register Doc 2026-04377). Replaces seniority-based retention with performance-based retention.
- USPS suspension of FERS employer contributions, April 9, 2026.

## SOURCES

- House Clerk vote tally, Roll Call 145: [clerk.house.gov/Votes/2025145](https://clerk.house.gov/Votes/2025145)
- CBO Publication 61381, "Reconciliation Recommendations of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform"
- NARFE, "Federal Workforce Provisions Dropped from H.R. 1 Prior to Senate Passage" (July 1, 2025)
- Federal News Network, "House-passed reconciliation bill includes more changes to proposed federal benefits cuts" (May 2025)
- NFFE press release, "Trump Administration Proposes Pay Freeze for Federal Workforce in FY 2027 Budget"
- Government Executive, "OPM to FEHB carriers: Cut costs, MAHA style" (April 2026)
- Talbot Spy, "Andy Harris stands alone as 'Present' for vote on budget reconciliation bill"
- Baltimore Sun, "Why Maryland Rep. Andy Harris voted 'present' on Trump's bill"

## PARTNERS

NFFE National and Locals 178, 476 (Aberdeen). AFGE District 14 and Local 331 (Perry Point). NTEU. NARFE (National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association). AFL-CIO Maryland.

## BRIEF 1.3

# The Promise We Made to Veterans

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING

When you sign up to defend this country, the deal is straightforward: you serve, and when you come home the country takes care of you. That deal is breaking down right now in three specific places.

### Toxic exposure care.

The PACT Act passed in 2022. It authorized \$797 billion over ten years to give burn pit veterans, Agent Orange veterans, and Gulf War veterans the healthcare they earned. Andy Harris voted Nay twice. He voted against the original House version (HR 3967, Roll Call 57, March 3, 2022, passed 256-174), and he voted against the final version that became law (S. 3373, Roll Call 309, July 13, 2022, passed 342-88). On the final passage vote, dozens of House Republicans flipped to Yea after public pressure from veterans groups. Andy Harris held his Nay.

The PACT Act is now being administratively gutted. The VA cut more than 28,000 employees in 2025 alone, including 1,800 claims processors. In December 2025, the VA announced 25,000 more cuts coming. Mental health wait times in Maryland exceeded 40 days in early 2026. A bill that took a decade to pass is being undone by understaffing.

### Combat-injured retirees.

The Major Richard Star Act would let about 50,000 combat-injured retirees collect both their military retirement pay and their VA disability rating. Right now, dollar-for-dollar offset rules cancel one against the other. The bill has 317 House cosponsors, more than enough to pass, and 78 Senate cosponsors, well over the 60 needed for cloture (the Senate vote that ends debate). It still has not passed. Senator Roger Wicker (R-MS), chair of Senate Armed Services, personally objected to unanimous consent twice (October 8, 2025 and March 3, 2026). He called the bill "double dipping."

### Suicide prevention.

Twenty-two veterans die by suicide every day. Four bills aimed at this crisis are stalled in committee. The Parker Gordon Fox suicide prevention program needs reauthorization. The Hannon Mental Health Care Improvement Act needs renewal. The transition assistance bill named for two veterans lost to suicide is sitting on a chair's desk. None of them are moving.

The pattern across all three is the same. Each bill exists with bipartisan support. The block is a small number of leadership decisions: committee chairs, Senate objectors, and appropriators who refuse to staff what they wrote into law.

## WHAT THIS MEANS AT HOME

There are roughly 50,000 to 60,000 veterans in MD-01. Harford County alone has 18,175 veterans, 9% of the population. Post-9/11 veterans in Harford: 5,841. Vietnam veterans: 4,960. Korea: 729. World War II: 116.

The Star Act would directly affect post-9/11 veterans in Harford and across MD-01 if any of them retired with combat injuries. Right now, the offset is taking money out of their retirement every month.

The PACT Act is the law that lets the Vietnam veteran in Talbot County get an Agent Orange claim processed. The 1,800 claims processors cut in 2025 are why that claim is now sitting for nine months.

The 40-day mental health wait time at Maryland VA facilities is what the Crisfield veteran hits when he calls the Pocomoke City clinic for help.

These are not abstract numbers. Every one of them maps to a household in this district.

## MY TAKE

A veteran signed a contract with the country. The country has to honor it. That obligation is the bare minimum a veteran can expect from the federal government, regardless of who controls Congress.

## OUR PLAN

### *In Congress*

Cosponsor the Major Richard Star Act and push to attach the language to the next National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), the annual must-pass defense bill that is usually how blocked veterans bills move.

Vote yes on full PACT Act funding in every appropriations cycle. Vote no on any cut to VA medical staffing.

Cosponsor the Parker Gordon Fox reauthorization (H.R. 1969), the Veteran Overmedication and Suicide Prevention Act (H.R. 136), the Daniel J. Harvey Jr. and Adam Lambert Servicemember Transition Act (H.R. 2878), and the Hannon Mental Health Care Improvement Act reauthorization (S. 793).

Join the House Veterans Affairs Committee if assigned. Otherwise, work through the bipartisan Veterans Caucus.

Use floor time to read names. Specifically, names of MD-01 veterans waiting on PACT Act claims and combat-injured veterans being shorted by the Star Act offset.

### *In the District*

A district office case manager dedicated to VA claims, separate from the federal workforce caseworker. Veterans should not have to wait on hold. The case manager works with veterans service organizations (American Legion, VFW, Vietnam Veterans of America) to triage stuck claims.

Veterans town halls, rotating across MD-01 counties. Cecil, Harford, Talbot, Dorchester, Worcester, and the rest. Open format. The point is to listen.

A specific outreach to post-9/11 veterans about the Star Act offset. Many do not know they are being shorted because the offset is buried in their retirement statements.

## Through Oversight

Demand committee hearings on VA staffing cuts and PACT Act implementation. Get the VA Secretary on the record about why claims processors are being cut while claims are stacking up.

Public letter to Senate Armed Services Chair Wicker demanding the Star Act move to the floor. Read the names of Wicker-blocked veterans into the Congressional Record.

Annual report from the district office on PACT Act claim wait times in MD-01. Public. Posted online.

## THE HONEST PART

The Star Act has the votes. It is being blocked by a single Senate chair. The most realistic path is attaching it to the next NDAA. That is one vote per year. We cosponsor every standalone version, push for the NDAA amendment every cycle, and make Wicker's name synonymous with the block.

The PACT Act funding cuts are administrative, not legislative. They happen at the VA Secretary's level and through OPM staffing decisions. Congressional pushback is hearings, oversight, and appropriations leverage. Not a single bill.

The four suicide prevention bills are bipartisan and uncontroversial on substance. The block is committee priorities, not opposition. The work is keeping pressure on the chair and looking for a vehicle (often an end-of-year omnibus or the NDAA) to ride them through.

Pretending we can reverse 28,000 VA staff cuts with one piece of legislation would be dishonest. The fix is a coalition Congress and an administration that wants to staff the VA.

## RECEIPTS

### BILLS

- H.R. 2102, Major Richard Star Act. Sponsors: Rep. Bilirakis (R-FL), Sens. Blumenthal (D-CT), Crapo (R-ID), Warren (D-MA). 317 House cosponsors, 78 Senate cosponsors. Blocked by Sen. Wicker (R-MS) on unanimous consent twice (October 8, 2025 and March 3, 2026).
- HR 3967, PACT Act (House first-passage version). Roll Call 57, March 3, 2022. Passed 256-174. **Andy Harris voted Nay.**
- S. 3373, PACT Act (Senate-amended final-passage version, signed into law). House Roll Call 309, July 13, 2022. Passed 342-88. **Andy Harris voted Nay.**
- H.R. 1969, No Wrong Door for Veterans Act (Parker Gordon Fox program reauthorization).
- H.R. 136, Veteran Overmedication and Suicide Prevention Act.
- H.R. 2878, Daniel J. Harvey Jr. and Adam Lambert Servicemember Transition Act.
- S. 793, Hannon Mental Health Care Improvement Act reauthorization.

### SOURCES

- Bilirakis press release on Star Act reintroduction
- MOAA Star Act SITREP
- Senate Veterans Affairs Committee on Wicker block
- VA workforce reduction data, December 2025 VA announcement

- Maryland mental health wait time data, MD VA Health Care System reporting (early 2026)
- Veterans demographics by Maryland county

#### **PARTNERS**

American Legion (Posts 70, 77, and others across MD-01). VFW (posts across MD-01). Vietnam Veterans of America. Maryland Department of Veterans and Military Families.

## BRIEF 1.4

# A VA That Actually Works on the Eastern Shore

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING

The federal VA system that takes care of veterans on the Eastern Shore is too thin and too far away. The VA Maryland Health Care System runs eight locations. Perry Point VA Medical Center sits at the western edge of Cecil County and serves as the regional hospital. Outside of Perry Point, only two federal VA outpatient clinics operate east of the Bay: Cambridge VA Outpatient Clinic in Dorchester County and Pocomoke City VA Clinic in Worcester County. Two clinics for an area that runs from Kent down to Somerset.

Easton has a state Department of Veterans Affairs office staffed by a state benefits specialist, but no federal VA outpatient clinic. Veterans in Talbot, Queen Anne's, Caroline, and Kent counties drive to Cambridge, drive to Pocomoke, or drive to Baltimore. For aging veterans, a 90-minute drive becomes a denial of care.

The mid-Shore counties have been asking for an expanded federal VA presence for years. Talbot County leadership and veterans service organizations have been pushing for it. The decisions get made at the regional VISN (Veterans Integrated Services Network) level. A full VA hospital in Easton is not realistic in the near term, but a Community-Based Outpatient Clinic in or near Easton with primary care, mental health, women's veterans care, and tele-specialty access is winnable through the next clinic siting cycle.

The other half of this fight is staffing what we already have. The VA cut more than 28,000 employees in 2025 alone (Brief 1.3 covers the national picture). On the Eastern Shore, that meant longer waits at Cambridge, longer waits at Pocomoke, and longer drives to Baltimore for anything specialized.

There is also a veteran homelessness piece. The HUD-VASH program (Housing and Urban Development plus VA Supportive Housing) provides housing vouchers paired with VA case management for homeless veterans. The program works when staffed and funded. In MD-01, the demand outstrips the supply.

## WHAT THIS MEANS AT HOME

### Talbot, Queen Anne's, Caroline, and Kent counties.

Four counties without a federal VA outpatient clinic in driving distance. A Vietnam veteran in Easton who needs specialty cardiology drives to Baltimore. A post-9/11 veteran in Centreville who needs PTSD treatment drives to Cambridge or Pocomoke and usually waits 40+ days for the appointment.

### Cecil County.

Perry Point VA Medical Center is the closest full federal VA hospital to MD-01. AFGE Local 331 represents the workers there. Brief 1.1 covers the bargaining rights fight at Perry Point. This brief covers the staffing one.

**Dorchester County.**

Cambridge VA Outpatient Clinic. The lifeline for lower-Shore veterans. Capacity is a chronic problem.

**Worcester County.**

Pocomoke City VA Clinic. The other lifeline. Same problem, smaller staff.

**Veteran homelessness.**

Hard to count precisely (HUD-VASH does not publish county-level breakdowns), but the population at risk in MD-01 is real. A homeless veteran in Salisbury, Cambridge, or Bel Air needs both housing and the VA case management to use it.

**MY TAKE**

A 90-minute drive for a doctor's appointment functions as a barrier rather than as access to care. Veterans on the Eastern Shore earned better than this.

**OUR PLAN*****In Congress***

Lead the federal advocacy for a new Community-Based Outpatient Clinic in Talbot County. Work with VA Maryland Health Care System leadership, VISN 5 leadership, and the House Veterans Affairs Committee to make the case in the next clinic siting cycle. The justification is documented underservice across the mid-Shore, an aging veteran population, and unsustainable travel times.

Push for specialty service expansion at Cambridge and Pocomoke. Even before a new clinic opens, the existing clinics can offer more on-site women's veterans care, dental, and tele-mental health. Those expansions are budgetable now.

Vote against any VA staffing reduction, hiring freeze, or contracting-out scheme. The PACT Act expanded VA enrollment significantly. Staffing has to keep up.

Cosponsor and push expansion of HUD-VASH funding and VA case management capacity. Veteran homelessness ends with housing plus case management. Both have to be funded.

***In the District***

A district office liaison for VA care issues, working alongside the case manager named in Brief 1.3. The liaison's specific job is local: clinic capacity, appointment wait times, specialty referrals, and the Easton CBOC fight specifically.

Site visits to Cambridge VA, Pocomoke VA, and Perry Point VA. Listening sessions with the staff, the veterans service organizations, and the patient population.

Coordination with Maryland's Commitment to Veterans (MCV) and the Maryland Department of Veterans and Military Families on housing, employment, and benefits services.

A specific outreach to homeless veterans services in Salisbury, Cambridge, and Bel Air. Working with local nonprofits to identify gaps in HUD-VASH coverage and case management.

### **Through Oversight**

Annual public report on VA wait times and staffing levels at Cambridge, Pocomoke, and Perry Point. Posted online. Wait times by specialty, by month.

Letter to the VA Secretary at the start of each appropriations cycle requesting funding allocations for Eastern Shore VA capacity expansion.

Press for a hearing on VA staffing impacts in rural and small-town communities. The Eastern Shore is the use case.

## **THE HONEST PART**

A new Community-Based Outpatient Clinic at Easton is a multi-year fight. The VA's clinic siting cycles do not turn quickly. The work in the first term is making the case, getting on the list, and not letting the request die when leadership turns over.

VA staffing levels are determined by the Cabinet department, not directly by Congress. Congressional pushback is appropriations, oversight, and public pressure. Reversing the 28,000 cuts already made requires a different administration.

HUD-VASH funding is set in the annual HUD-VA budget. Expanding it is a budget fight, not a single bill. The work is making sure MD-01's piece of the pie is fought for.

Winning the Easton CBOC and defending Perry Point's union and the Cambridge and Pocomoke staffing levels are achievable from this seat. Rebuilding the entire VA system from a single congressional district is not achievable from one seat, and pretending it is would be dishonest. The work is staking out the achievable fights and pushing them through.

## **RECEIPTS**

### **TOOLS AND AUTHORITIES**

- VA appropriations process. VA MISSION Act oversight. PACT Act implementation. House Veterans Affairs Committee. VA Maryland Health Care System / VISN 5.

### **ANDY HARRIS'S RECORD ON VETERANS FUNDING**

- Voted Nay on the PACT Act on both House passage votes: HR 3967 (Roll Call 57, March 3, 2022) and S. 3373 final passage (Roll Call 309, July 13, 2022). See Brief 1.3 for full receipts.
- As Freedom Caucus chair, helped force the 43-day government shutdown of October-November 2025 that contributed to 10,300 federal job losses in Maryland during that two-month window.

### **SOURCES**

- VA Maryland Health Care System facility list: [va.gov/maryland-health-care/locations](https://va.gov/maryland-health-care/locations)
- HUD-VASH program: [hudexchange.info/programs/hud-vash](https://hudexchange.info/programs/hud-vash)
- Maryland Department of Veterans and Military Families: [veterans.maryland.gov](https://veterans.maryland.gov)
- Maryland's Commitment to Veterans (MCV): [veterans.maryland.gov/maryland-commitment-to-veterans-mcv](https://veterans.maryland.gov/maryland-commitment-to-veterans-mcv)

- Talbot County Veterans Commission advocacy correspondence on Easton CBOC.

## **PARTNERS**

Talbot County Veterans Commission. American Legion Posts 70, 77, and others across MD-01. VFW posts across MD-01. Maryland's Commitment to Veterans (MCV). National Coalition for Homeless Veterans. Maryland Department of Veterans and Military Families.

## BRIEF 1.5

# The Right to Organize

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING

The right to organize is the workers' side of the deal. You bring your labor and your employer brings the wage. When the wage is unfair, the conditions are unsafe, or the schedule is impossible, organizing is the legal mechanism for talking to your coworkers and bargaining together.

Right now, the right to organize is under attack on three fronts.

### **Private-sector organizing.**

The PRO Act (Protecting the Right to Organize Act, H.R. 20) is the major bill on private-sector union rights. It strengthens the National Labor Relations Act in real ways. Real penalties for employers who retaliate against union organizers. A ban on state right-to-work laws (which weaken unions by letting workers benefit from union contracts without paying dues). Expanded worker classification (cracks down on misclassifying employees as contractors). Permits secondary boycotts (unions can strike at suppliers, not just the employer). Bans permanent striker replacements.

The PRO Act has been reintroduced in the 119th Congress. It has 47 Senate Democratic cosponsors but no path to 60. House floor action: none.

### **Public-sector organizing.**

The Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act (H.R. 2736) sets a federal floor for collective bargaining rights for public-sector workers (federal, state, and local). Right now, public-sector bargaining is a state-by-state patchwork. Some states ban most public worker unions outright. The bill creates federal minimum standards.

H.R. 2736 was referred to committee in April 2025. No markup scheduled.

### **Federal-sector organizing.**

Brief 1.1 covers this in detail. The Protect America's Workforce Act (H.R. 2550) restores federal collective bargaining rights stripped by EO 14251. Andy Harris voted Nay on H.R. 2550.

Across all three, the pattern is the same: the legislation exists, the need is real, and the block is leadership.

## WHAT THIS MEANS AT HOME

Walk through MD-01 and the right-to-organize fight is not abstract.

### **Aberdeen Proving Ground (Harford County).**

Federal workers. Brief 1.1.

**Perdue Farms (Salisbury, Wicomico County).**

Line workers, mostly Black and Latino, mostly women. Among the highest workplace injury rates in American food production. The largest single employer on the Lower Shore. UFCW (United Food and Commercial Workers) has organized some Perdue plants and not others.

**The watermen on the Bay (Tilghman, Smith Island, Crisfield, Rock Hall, others).**

Independent contractors by classification, but the economic relationships often look more like employer-employee. Many would benefit from sectoral bargaining the PRO Act would enable.

**Retail and service workers across MD-01.**

Walmart in Salisbury. Amazon distribution centers in Cecil County. Restaurants and small businesses in every town. Most have no union representation. The PRO Act is what would change that.

**Building trades.**

IBEW, Carpenters, Operating Engineers, Plumbers and Pipefitters. Strong in the Aberdeen and Edgewood corridors and in the Baltimore County portion of the district. Active partners.

If the PRO Act passed, the Perdue worker who has been organizing quietly for two years could publicly do it without fear of being fired. If H.R. 2736 passed, the Maryland teacher whose union rights are already protected by state law would have a federal backstop.

## MY TAKE

If you want to be paid fairly, the most effective tool you have is your coworkers. That is the lesson of every American labor fight, from the Pullman strike to the West Virginia teachers strike. The right to organize is a basic American freedom that is being chipped away right now.

## OUR PLAN

### *In Congress*

Cosponsor the PRO Act (H.R. 20).

Cosponsor the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act (H.R. 2736).

Vote yes on every roll call related to private-sector and public-sector organizing rights, including procedural votes.

Push for committee markup of H.R. 2736 and floor action on H.R. 20.

Show up on picket lines. When workers in MD-01 strike for fair wages and safe conditions, they should see their congresswoman standing with them. Every time.

## *In the District*

A district office liaison for labor issues, working with AFL-CIO Maryland State and DC, the affiliated international unions, and independent worker organizations. The liaison fields organizing complaints, NLRB filings, retaliation issues, and contract negotiations.

An MD-01 Labor Summit, separate from the Federal Workforce Summit (Brief 1.1). The Labor Summit convenes private-sector locals, building trades, public-sector locals, and worker centers. The point is to connect organizers across sectors and identify common fights.

Specific outreach to Perdue line workers. The largest concentration of unorganized blue-collar workers in MD-01 is in their plants. They deserve a member of Congress who will publicly stand with them when they organize.

## *Through Oversight*

Public letters to NLRB regional offices on cases of retaliation against organizers in MD-01.

Floor speeches naming employers who illegally fire organizers. Public, on the record, by name.

Coordinate with the Maryland Attorney General on misclassification cases (workers wrongly classified as contractors to avoid labor protections).

## THE HONEST PART

The PRO Act has been introduced every Congress for the last decade. It does not pass without filibuster reform or a 60-vote bipartisan coalition that does not currently exist. Until that changes, the work is keeping it on the radar, building the coalition, and being ready when the political math shifts.

The Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act has even less momentum. The work is movement-building (with AFSCME, AFT, NEA, SEIU) rather than imminent passage.

Federal workforce bargaining (H.R. 2550) is the most viable of the three because the House already passed it. Brief 1.1 covers the Senate fight.

Labor rights legislation in this country has historically come in waves, on the heels of broad worker mobilization, in the 1930s, in the 1960s, and in the recent rebound. The work is being part of that wave when it comes, and being ready when it does.

## RECEIPTS

### BILLS

- H.R. 20, Protecting the Right to Organize Act (PRO Act). Sponsors: Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA), Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT). 47 Senate Democratic cosponsors. No path to 60 Senate votes.
- H.R. 2736, Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act. Sponsors: Rep. Donald Norcross (D-NJ), Sen. Mazie Hirono (D-HI). Referred to committee April 8, 2025. No markup scheduled.

- H.R. 2550, Protect America's Workforce Act. See Brief 1.1.

## SOURCES

- [congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov) bill records for H.R. 20 and H.R. 2736.
- AFL-CIO scorecard for Andy Harris.
- NLRB regional office: [nlrb.gov](https://www.nlr.gov)

## PARTNERS

AFL-CIO Maryland State and DC. UFCW (United Food and Commercial Workers, Perdue organizing). IBEW (Aberdeen and Edgewood corridors). Carpenters. Operating Engineers. Plumbers and Pipefitters. Worker Center coalitions.

## BRIEF 1.6

# Social Security: You Paid In, You Get Yours

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING

You paid into Social Security every paycheck of your working life. The government took 6.2% off the top, and your employer matched it. That money was your contribution to a guaranteed retirement check, plus disability protection, plus survivor benefits for your spouse and kids.

You held up your end. Right now the deal is being undermined.

### The "going broke" pitch.

Politicians and pundits will tell you Social Security is "going broke." That framing distorts the actual situation. The Social Security trust fund is projected to be unable to pay full benefits starting around 2033 unless Congress acts. If nothing is done, retirees would see roughly a 20% reduction in benefits, with the remaining 80% still flowing. The shortfall is a Congressional funding decision.

The "going broke" talk is usually a setup for two wrong answers: cutting benefits, or raising the retirement age. Both shift the cost onto the very workers who paid in.

### The honest fix: lift the cap.

Social Security only taxes wages up to a cap. The 2025 cap was \$168,600. The 2026 figure is published by SSA each October and increases each year. A worker making \$50,000 a year pays Social Security tax on every dollar. A CEO making \$5 million a year pays Social Security tax only on the first \$168,600 or so and not a cent on the rest. Lifting or eliminating the cap alone would close most of the projected shortfall and let benefits expand.

### The reconciliation attack on federal retirement supplements.

Brief 1.2 covers the May 2025 reconciliation bill (H.R. 1). The House-passed version of that bill would have eliminated the FERS (Federal Employees Retirement System) supplement starting January 2028. The FERS supplement is the bridge payment that lets federal workers retire before 62 and have income until Social Security kicks in. Andy Harris voted Present on H.R. 1, the only member of the House to do so, and the bill passed by a single vote. The Senate stripped the FERS supplement provision before the bill became law on July 4, 2025. The cuts were defeated, but the same proposals are expected to return.

### Defending the SSA.

The Social Security Administration itself has been hit with workforce cuts. Field offices have closed. Wait times have grown. SSA-Woodlawn, in Baltimore County (with significant MD-01 commuter ties), has been impacted. Constituents trying to claim benefits they earned are being told to wait longer.

## WHAT THIS MEANS AT HOME

A large share of MD-01 households receive Social Security benefits, including retirement, disability, and survivors benefits. The MD-01 retiree on Social Security is averaging about \$1,900 a month in benefits in 2026. If Congress lets the trust fund hit the projected shortfall in 2033 without acting, that retiree's check drops to about \$1,520 a month. That is \$380 a month gone. The math is the same for the widow on survivors benefits, the disabled worker on SSDI, and the federal retiree whose FERS supplement nearly disappeared in last year's reconciliation fight. Lifting the Social Security wage cap closes most of that gap by drawing more from high earners. The benefit-cut proposals close the gap by taking less from retirees who already paid in.

## MY TAKE

You paid into Social Security through 6.2% of every paycheck for your entire working life. The government has to honor that contract. Anyone who tells you "we cannot afford it" is asking you to take less than you earned while people making \$5 million a year pay nothing past the cap. The honest fix is lifting that cap so high earners pay the same percentage everyone else does.

## OUR PLAN

### *In Congress*

Cosponsor legislation to lift or eliminate the Social Security wage cap on high earners. Multiple bills exist (the Social Security 2100 Act and the Social Security Expansion Act among them). Cosponsor the strongest version.

Vote against any Social Security benefit cut. Any retirement age increase. Any privatization scheme.

Cosponsor legislation to expand Social Security benefits, including a more generous cost-of-living adjustment formula (CPI-E, which tracks senior costs more accurately than the current measure).

Cosponsor legislation to defend the FERS supplement against future cuts. The May 2025 House version of H.R. 1 would have eliminated it. The Senate stripped the provision; it will return.

Defend Social Security Administration funding and staffing in every appropriations cycle. Vote against any SSA workforce cut.

### *In the District*

A district office case manager dedicated to Social Security claims, working with constituents whose SSA claims are stuck, denied, or under-processed. The case manager is fluent in retirement, disability, and survivor benefit cases.

Social Security clinics, rotating across MD-01 counties. Open hours where constituents can bring SSA paperwork and get help navigating it.

Specific outreach to retirees on the Lower Shore (Salisbury, Cambridge, Easton, Princess Anne). High concentration of fixed-income retirees. The clinic and the case manager should be visible there.

### **Through Oversight**

Public report on SSA wait times and field office capacity in MD-01. Posted online.

Demand committee hearings on SSA workforce cuts and the impact on claimants. Get the SSA Commissioner on the record.

Letter to the Speaker and Appropriations chair every cycle: SSA staffing, full Social Security obligations, no benefit cuts.

## **THE HONEST PART**

Lifting the Social Security cap requires legislation. The legislation needs a House majority that wants to do it and a Senate path that does not currently exist. Under current conditions, the work is keeping the legislation alive, building public support, and being ready when conditions change.

Defending the FERS supplement against the next attempt is the live fight. The Senate stripped the cut from H.R. 1 in 2025, but the same proposals will return in the next reconciliation cycle. The work is making sure the supplement survives the next round.

SSA staffing is administrative. Congressional pushback is appropriations and oversight, not a single bill.

The "going broke" frame is going to keep getting pushed. The work is countering it every time, with the math, with the honest fix, and with the names of who is profiting from the lie.

## **RECEIPTS**

### **BILLS**

- Social Security 2100 Act (multiple versions across Congresses). Lifts or eliminates the wage cap; expands benefits.
- Social Security Expansion Act (Sen. Bernie Sanders).
- H.R. 1, One Big Beautiful Bill Act (May 2025). See Brief 1.2 for full receipts on the FERS supplement cut. **Andy Harris voted Present.**

### **SOURCES**

- SSA wage base history: [ssa.gov/oact/cola/cbb.html](https://ssa.gov/oact/cola/cbb.html)
- SSA Trustees Report (annual): [ssa.gov/OACT/TR](https://ssa.gov/OACT/TR)
- Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) Social Security analysis
- AARP advocacy on Social Security expansion
- NARFE, "Federal Workforce Provisions Dropped from H.R. 1 Prior to Senate Passage" (July 1, 2025)

### **PARTNERS**

National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare (NCPSSM). Social Security Works. AARP Maryland. AFL-CIO Maryland (retiree affiliates). NARFE.

## BRIEF 1.7

# The Right to Vote and Be Counted

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING

The most basic deal in American democracy is this: every American citizen gets a vote, and every vote gets counted. That is the deal. It is being broken in slow motion across the country, and the legislation that would fix it is sitting in Congress.

### **The John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.**

This is the bill. H.R. 14 in the House. S. 2523 in the Senate. It was reintroduced in the 119th Congress on March 5, 2025, by Rep. Terri Sewell (D-AL). The bill restores the preclearance framework that the Supreme Court gutted in *Shelby County v. Holder* (2013), creates a modern coverage formula based on recent voting-rights violations, strengthens Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act in response to *Brnovich v. DNC* (2021), and expands the federal observer program.

### **Why preclearance matters.**

Before *Shelby County*, jurisdictions with a history of voter suppression had to get federal approval before changing their voting rules. After *Shelby*, they did not. In the years since, those same jurisdictions have purged voter rolls, closed polling places, and tightened voter ID requirements without federal review. The John R. Lewis Act restores the federal review.

### **Section 2 erosion.**

Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act lets voters sue when an election rule disproportionately burdens their right to vote. The Supreme Court has steadily narrowed Section 2. *Brnovich v. DNC* (2021) made it harder to challenge laws that disproportionately disenfranchise voters of color. *Louisiana v. Callais* further narrowed Section 2's reach. The John R. Lewis Act addresses both.

### **Maryland's role.**

Maryland is not the worst-case state on voter suppression. We have same-day registration, mail voting, and well-staffed elections. But federal elections and federal protections are indivisible. What happens in Texas, Louisiana, or Georgia affects who controls the U.S. House and Senate. Marylanders cannot pretend that what happens elsewhere does not affect us.

### **Andy Harris's record.**

The John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act has come up for House votes in two prior Congresses. Andy Harris voted Nay on H.R. 4 in the 117th Congress (Roll Call 260, August 24, 2021, passed 219-212 along party lines) and Nay on H.R. 4 in the 116th Congress (passed 228-187 on December 6, 2019, also along party lines). The current 119th Congress version (H.R. 14, reintroduced March 5, 2025) has not yet had a House floor vote.

## WHAT THIS MEANS AT HOME

MD-01 covers 11 counties and parts of 2. Each one runs its elections through a Board of Elections that follows state law. Maryland's voting infrastructure is reasonably strong.

But MD-01 voters are still affected when:

- A state with weaker voting rights gerrymanders its districts and shifts the U.S. House majority.
- A federal election turns on states with weaker voting rights protections.
- A Supreme Court decision changes what every state can do.
- A federal voting rights bill that would have helped voters in other states fails because Senators from states like ours did not move it.

The right to vote in MD-01 is also tied to local logistical questions. Polling place hours and locations. Ballot drop boxes. Mail ballot deadlines. Voter assistance for elderly and disabled voters. Mid-Shore counties with limited polling sites face access challenges that are different in kind from Baltimore County's.

## MY TAKE

If your vote does not count, none of the rest of this plan matters. The right to vote is the foundation of every other deal this country has made, and protecting it is bipartisan baseline work that this Congress has refused to do.

## OUR PLAN

### *In Congress*

Cosponsor the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (H.R. 14).

Vote yes on every roll call related to voting rights, including procedural votes. No "Present" votes on the right to vote.

Work with the Maryland delegation, especially Senators Van Hollen and Alsobrooks, to keep public pressure on the Senate filibuster question whenever voting rights legislation returns to the floor.

Cosponsor any companion legislation on automatic voter registration, voting rights restoration for formerly incarcerated people, and election worker protections.

### *In the District*

A non-partisan voter assistance hotline operated out of the district office during early voting and on Election Day. The line helps any constituent who hits a barrier at the polls. This is constituent service, not campaign work, and that distinction is respected and enforced.

Plain-language publication of every voting rule change in MD-01 counties at least 60 days before any federal election. An early-warning system for voters. This does not require legislation. It requires staff and intention.

Voter education sessions across MD-01 counties. Open hours for questions about voter registration, mail ballot deadlines, polling place changes, and ID requirements.

### **Through Oversight**

Annual public report on voting rule changes across MD-01. Posted online.

Engagement with the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division on any voting rights complaints originating from MD-01.

Coordination with the Maryland Attorney General on voting rights enforcement.

## **THE HONEST PART**

The John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act has passed the House before and stalled in the Senate over the filibuster. That dynamic has not changed. Until the Senate composition or rules change, the legislation does not become law.

The work of the first term is keeping the bill alive, building public pressure on the Senate, and using the district office to give MD-01 voters every legal protection currently available. The constituent service piece (hotline, early-warning system, voter education) does not require new legislation. It requires intent.

Pretending we can pass H.R. 14 in the next two years would be dishonest. Working hard on what is in our power, while keeping the larger fight alive, is what we can do.

## **RECEIPTS**

### **BILLS**

- H.R. 14, John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (119th Congress). Sponsor: Rep. Terri Sewell (D-AL). Reintroduced March 5, 2025.
- S. 2523, Senate companion. Sponsor: Sen. Durbin (D-IL); cosponsors include Sens. Warnock, Schumer, Booker. Introduced July 29, 2025.
- H.R. 4, John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (117th Congress). House Roll Call 260, August 24, 2021. Passed 219-212 along party lines. **Andy Harris voted Nay.**
- H.R. 4, Voting Rights Advancement Act (116th Congress). House passed December 6, 2019, 228-187 along party lines. **Andy Harris voted Nay.**

### **COURT CASES**

- *Shelby County v. Holder*, 570 U.S. 529 (2013). Gutted preclearance.
- *Brnovich v. DNC*, 594 U.S. 647 (2021). Narrowed Section 2.
- *Louisiana v. Callais* (2026). Further narrowed Section 2; decided April 29, 2026, 6-3 (Alito majority).

### **SOURCES**

- congress.gov bill record H.R. 14 (119th Congress)
- Sewell press release on H.R. 14 reintroduction (March 5, 2025)
- Brennan Center for Justice voting rights tracker
- NAACP LDF voting rights resources

- Brennan Center, Louisiana v. Callais explainer

## **PARTNERS**

NAACP Legal Defense Fund. Brennan Center for Justice. Common Cause Maryland. ACLU of Maryland. League of Women Voters of Maryland. Maryland State Conference of the NAACP.

## SOURCES

# Theme 1: Honor the Deal We Made

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Sources for every claim made in the briefs of this theme. Bills cite the 119th Congress sponsor and bill number unless otherwise noted; "see *Brief X.Y*" indicates a citation that recurs across briefs and is fully detailed in the named brief.

## THEME 01: HONOR THE DEAL WE MADE

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### Brief 1.1: Bargaining Rights and the Loyalty Test

#### BILLS

- H.R. 2550, Protect America's Workforce Act (Golden D-ME, Fitzpatrick R-PA). House passed 231-195 on December 11, 2025 (Roll Call 332). **Andy Harris voted Nay**. Senate companion S. 2837 (Sen. Murkowski cosponsoring).
- H.R. 492, Saving the Civil Service Act (Connolly D-VA, Fitzpatrick R-PA, Mfume D-MD, Bacon R-NE). Stuck in House Oversight Committee.

#### COURT CASES

- AFGE et al. v. Trump (3:25-cv-03698, N.D. Cal.). EO 14251 challenge. Preliminary injunction granted June 24, 2025; 9th Circuit lifted the injunction February 2026.
- AFGE v. VA (1:25-cv-00583, D.R.I.). Master CBA reinstatement. Judge DuBose threatened contempt March 27, 2026.
- PEER v. Trump (8:25-cv-00260, D. Md.). Schedule F challenge in Maryland federal court.
- NTEU v. Trump (1:25-cv-00170, D.D.C.). Schedule F challenge.

#### SOURCES

- House Clerk vote tally, Roll Call 332, 119th Congress.
- Government Executive, "Blatant disrespect": Judge contemplates contempt proceedings after VA re-terminated union contract" (March 2026).
- Federal News Network, "VA re-terminates AFGE contract for 300K employees, despite court order to restore it."
- Maryland Governor's Office, federal job loss totals (2025).

### Brief 1.2: The Triple Hit: Pay, Health, Retirement

#### BILLS

- H.R. 1, One Big Beautiful Bill Act (May 2025 reconciliation). Roll Call 145, May 22, 2025. Passed 215-214-1. **Andy Harris voted Present**, the only member of the House to do so.
- H.R. 493, FAIR Act. 4.3% federal employee pay raise for 2026. Sponsor: Rep. Connolly (D-VA).
- House Democratic FY27 pay raise legislation (4.1% raise, introduced February 2026).

#### ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

- OPM call letter to FEHB carriers, March 31, 2026 (MAHA-style cost cuts; gender-affirming care coverage ended for 2026).
- OPM proposed Reduction in Force rule, March 5, 2026 (Federal Register Doc 2026-04377).

- USPS suspension of FERS employer contributions, April 9, 2026.

#### SOURCES

- House Clerk vote tally, Roll Call 145.
- CBO Publication 61381, "Reconciliation Recommendations of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform."
- NARFE, "Federal Workforce Provisions Dropped from H.R. 1 Prior to Senate Passage" (July 1, 2025).
- Talbot Spy, "Andy Harris stands alone as 'Present' for vote on budget reconciliation bill."

### Brief 1.3: The Promise We Made to Veterans

#### BILLS

- H.R. 2102, Major Richard Star Act (Bilirakis R-FL). 317 House cosponsors, 78 Senate cosponsors. Blocked by Sen. Wicker (R-MS) on unanimous consent twice (Oct 8, 2025 and March 3, 2026).
- HR 3967, PACT Act (House first-passage). Roll Call 57, March 3, 2022. **Andy Harris voted Nay.**
- S. 3373, PACT Act final passage. House Roll Call 309, July 13, 2022. Passed 342-88. **Andy Harris voted Nay.**
- H.R. 1969, No Wrong Door for Veterans Act (Parker Gordon Fox program reauthorization).
- H.R. 136, Veteran Overmedication and Suicide Prevention Act.
- H.R. 2878, Daniel J. Harvey Jr. and Adam Lambert Servicemember Transition Act.
- S. 793, Hannon Mental Health Care Improvement Act reauthorization.

#### SOURCES

- Bilirakis press release on Star Act reintroduction.
- MOAA Star Act SITREP.
- Senate Veterans Affairs Committee on Wicker block.
- VA workforce reduction data, December 2025 announcement.
- Maryland mental health wait time data (early 2026).

### Brief 1.4: A VA That Actually Works on the Eastern Shore

#### TOOLS AND AUTHORITIES

- VA appropriations process. VA MISSION Act oversight. PACT Act implementation.
- House Veterans Affairs Committee. VA Maryland Health Care System / VISN 5.

#### ANDY HARRIS RECORD

- Voted Nay on PACT Act on both House passage votes (see Brief 1.3 for full receipts).
- As Freedom Caucus chair, helped force the 43-day government shutdown of October-November 2025.

#### SOURCES

- VA Maryland Health Care System facility list.
- HUD-VASH program documentation.
- Maryland Department of Veterans and Military Families.
- Maryland's Commitment to Veterans (MCV).
- Talbot County Veterans Commission advocacy on Easton CBOC.

## Brief 1.5: The Right to Organize

### BILLS

- H.R. 20, Protecting the Right to Organize Act (PRO Act). Sponsors: Bobby Scott (D-VA), Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), Bernie Sanders (I-VT). 47 Senate Democratic cosponsors.
- H.R. 2736, Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act (Norcross D-NJ, Hirono D-HI). Referred to committee April 8, 2025.
- H.R. 2550, Protect America's Workforce Act (see Brief 1.1).

### SOURCES

- congress.gov bill records for H.R. 20 and H.R. 2736.
- AFL-CIO scorecard for Andy Harris.
- NLRB regional office.

## Brief 1.6: Social Security: You Paid In, You Get Yours

### BILLS

- Social Security 2100 Act (multiple versions across Congresses). Lifts or eliminates the wage cap; expands benefits.
- Social Security Expansion Act (Sen. Bernie Sanders).
- H.R. 1, OBBBA (May 2025) FERS supplement provisions (see Brief 1.2). **Andy Harris voted Present.**

### SOURCES

- SSA wage base history ([ssa.gov/oact/cola/cbb.html](https://ssa.gov/oact/cola/cbb.html)).
- SSA Trustees Report (annual).
- Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP).
- AARP advocacy on Social Security expansion.
- NARFE, "Federal Workforce Provisions Dropped from H.R. 1" (July 1, 2025).

## Brief 1.7: The Right to Vote and Be Counted

### BILLS

- H.R. 14, John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (119th Congress). Sponsor: Rep. Terri Sewell (D-AL). Reintroduced March 5, 2025.
- S. 2523, Senate companion (Durbin D-IL; cosponsors Warnock, Schumer, Booker). Introduced July 29, 2025.
- H.R. 4 (117th Congress). House Roll Call 260, August 24, 2021. Passed 219-212. **Andy Harris voted Nay.**
- H.R. 4 (116th Congress). House passed December 6, 2019, 228-187. **Andy Harris voted Nay.**

### COURT CASES

- Shelby County v. Holder, 570 U.S. 529 (2013). Gutted preclearance.
- Brnovich v. DNC, 594 U.S. 647 (2021). Narrowed Section 2.
- Louisiana v. Callais (2026). Further narrowed Section 2; decided April 29, 2026, 6-3 (Alito majority).

### SOURCES

- congress.gov bill record H.R. 14 (119th Congress).
- Sewell press release on H.R. 14 reintroduction (March 5, 2025).
- Brennan Center for Justice voting rights tracker.
- NAACP LDF voting rights resources.

WANT MORE

# Read the full plan.

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This is one of five themes from **The New Plan**, Randi White's plan for MD-01. Read all 27 briefs, every citation, and the full pay-for plan in one place.

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READ EVERYTHING AT

[randiformd.com/plan](https://randiformd.com/plan)

Or write me. The plan is a working document and I read what comes in.  
[info@randiformd.com](mailto:info@randiformd.com)