



FAIR RETURN FOR EMPLOYEES ON THEIR INITIAL RETIREMENT EARNED ACT

Some federal employees are under a “special “group (6c designated occupations) considered for an earlier retirement than most civil servants. These employees work in such positions as federal firefighters, federal law enforcement officers, Customs and Border Protection officers, etc. These employees have a physically demanding job description and have different responsibilities from most civil servants.

For these employees, they must plan for their mandatory retirement age – normally after 20 years of service – and pay an additional portion of their paychecks toward their retirement. Should these individuals be severely injured on the job, however, they will lose all benefits of their early retirement system if they decide to return to work for the federal government as a civil servant.

Problem

When these groups of employees are healthy enough to be able to return to work in a new civil service position, they are ineligible from retiring after 20 years of service and must work an extra 10 years to become eligible for retirement, despite their ongoing injury. When they finally retire, these employees are also barred from getting back the additional contributions they made in their previous federal job. Now faced with no prospects of an early retirement, some of these employees may decide to take apply for disability retirement or leave federal service altogether. Current policy discourages a return to work for the civil service, as these injured employees would have to work an additional 10 years and see no financial benefit from their previous service.

THE FAIR RETURN FOR EMPLOYEES ON THEIR INITIAL RETIREMENT EARNED (FAIR RETIRE) ACT

The bill helps those 6c retirement eligible employees injured performing their job to be eligible to continue paying into their 6c retirement after coming back to work in the civil service. These individuals would also be eligible to retire after 20 years of service and, should they choose to discontinue their careers in federal service, would be eligible for a lump sum payment of their 6c funds post-retirement.

The bill emphasizes that agencies should also attempt to reappoint these covered individuals, to the greatest extent possible, to a position in the civil service that is not a covered position, but is with the same federal agency, in the same geographic location, and at a commensurate level of pay.