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February 14, 2020

The Honorable Mark T. Esper
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Esper:

On behalf of the 17 International Union affiliates that comprise the Metal Trades Department of the AFL-CIO, I urge you to please reject any implementation of the President's memorandum dated January 29, 2020, providing you with discretion in eliminating workers unions and their right to collectively bargain conditions with the U.S. Department of Defense. An adverse decision by your office in implementing this shortsighted and politically motivated directive will not only subject federal employees and our armed forces to harm's way and will jeopardize the national security of all Americans. The affiliated unions of the Metal Trades are counting on you to strongly consider when making your decision regarding the implementation of this immoral directive, the pride, commitment and level of production demonstrated each day by your agency's unionized premier federal workforce in their pursuit of and commitment to the mission.

During the 58 years since Metal Trades Federal Employees first achieved recognition as a union at the Department of Defense, representatives have worked in partnership with Command officials to find solutions and improvements in all types of matters that effect the mission. Together, we have achieved solutions that continue to assure the safety and increased production for everyone working in Department of Defense bases, yards and installations. We have worked with Command to ensure that each Department of Defense operation has a steady, agile and highly skilled workforce at its immediate disposal. Nothing in the history of metal trades federal employee representation at the Department of Defense suggests that our past successful partnership cannot continue to efficiently safeguard the public interest and national security.

Metal Trades federal employees have worked hand-in-hand with agency officials in singular focus at times of national emergency, stemming back to the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Vietnam War, the attack of 9/11 and throughout the nation's current and continuous response to terrorism.

America's Metal Trades workers and their union have met the call to duty and defense of our nation with distinction!

Sincerely,

James V. Hart
President