



Improving Performance, Accountability and Responsiveness in the Civil Service

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My name is Miranda Yaver. I am a political scientist and health policy professor at the University of Pittsburgh, prior to which I was an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Wheaton College in Massachusetts. I received my Ph.D. in Political Science (American Politics) at Columbia University, during which time I focused my studies on American bureaucracy.

In light of this, I am writing to express my strongest opposition to the “Improving Performance, Accountability and Responsiveness in the Civil Service” rule proposed by the Office of Personnel Management. Politicizing the civil service would be dangerous to this country, undercutting substantive policy expertise where we need it most, and instead returning America to the spoils (or patronage) system that we developed the civil service to move away from.

What did this spoils system look like? People received government posts because of partisan loyalty rather than any semblance of merit. What’s more, there was corruption and abuse, and prioritizing the hiring of inexperienced loyalists bred inefficiencies in governance.