

*American Federation of Government Employees  
Local 12, AFL-CIO*

May 1, 2017  
R. Alexander Acosta  
Secretary  
United States Department of Labor  
200 Constitution Avenue N.W.  
Washington D.C. 20210

RE: Acosta Letter of April 28, 2017, to the Employees of the United States Department of Labor  
Dear Secretary Acosta:

On behalf of the more than 3,000 bargaining unit employees represented by AFGE Local 12, AFL-CIO, we want to welcome you to the United States Department of Labor! We look forward to a productive relationship with you and your leadership team. While we may not always agree, we do believe that there is room for common ground.

In that light, we appreciate your comments concerning the loss of American jobs to foreign organizations. Our members have devoted their lives to protecting America's working families. So, we are deeply hurt with the loss of every single decent middle-class American job exported because of ill considered "free trade agreements" such as NAFTA.

However, free trade agreements are not the only way by which American workers are displaced. There is an army of contractors who work for the United States Department of Labor that clearly outnumbers federal employees here. Unlike federal employees, these contractors are not required to be citizens of the United States. In addition, there are foreign-based contractors such as BAE Systems, a British-owned company, that have contracts with the federal government. In these tough economic times, why is taxpayer money going to foreign-based corporations?

Of course, the simplest, most economically efficient, and dare I say the patriotic way to address this issue is to "contract in" all of this work. Federal employees have proved in study after study that they produce better quality work than the private contractors with lower overall cost to the taxpayer. In addition, contracting-in ensures that the taxes paid by Americans stay in America.

We would be happy to meet as soon as possible to help craft a solution to make sure that not one dime of the taxpayers' money is being used at the United States Department of Labor to export American jobs.

Sincerely,  
Alex Bastani  
President  
AFGE Local 12