

Federal worker: “Democrats are just as eager as Republicans to victimize immigrants”

Our reporters
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The *World Socialist Web Site* spoke with federal workers who expressed their outrage and disgust with both parties.

One worker who wished to be unidentified said:

“Federal employees are tired of being used as pawns in political infighting. I’ve worked for the government eight years and have experienced government shutdowns almost every year. It’s nerve-racking. I especially feel horrible for the employees who will have their paychecks delayed right around the holidays. Politicians think this is a game and don’t consider the livelihoods of federal employees.”

Drew, an environmental engineer at the Environmental Protection Agency, told the WSW:

“There are a lot of people in my office, myself included, who can’t afford to miss a paycheck. If we’re furloughed in January, there’s a chance we might not get paid at all. I’ve got to write my landlord and my daughter’s daycare and explain why I’ll be late. I have no idea what they’ll say. My wife has also put off a trip to see her mom, who’s been sick, ‘til we know when the next paycheck will arrive.

“But you know what, despite all this I would be okay with the shutdown if it meant a real fight against Trump’s attack on immigrants. Many of my colleagues are immigrants themselves or know people whose lives have been turned upside down. Some of us also see firsthand in our work how immigrant communities and other layers of the highly exploited suffer the worst effects of environmental pollution. They often live close to toxic waste sites, are exposed to high levels of lead in their schools and work near air pollution hot spots.

“However, since I started as a federal worker under the Obama administration, I’ve seen how the Democrats are just as eager as the Republicans to

victimize and scapegoat undocumented immigrants. The border is already a place where all rights are suspended. Millions have already been deported. This shutdown is a sideshow.

“I haven’t heard a peep from the union about the shutdown, not even to complain about the near-total blackout of information from EPA leadership. Not that I expect anything else. I remember prior to the long shutdown of the Obama administration they did absolutely nothing to organize workers to fight back. The only thing they did do was give us some condescending advice on how to buy cheaper Christmas presents.

“I also recall clearly how they lobbied Congress, arguing that well-educated federal employees shouldn’t be treated like Walmart workers—implying that we were somehow better and deserved to be treated with more respect. What a load of garbage! If anything, our experience over the last few years shows that we’re just as expendable; that we’re all in the same boat. Our real allies are those who are also being exploited, not the millionaires who line the halls of Congress.”



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