

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 357

To impose restrictions on Federal agencies with respect to appointments,
and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 3, 2025

Mrs. BLACKBURN introduced the following bill; which was read twice and
referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

A BILL

To impose restrictions on Federal agencies with respect to
appointments, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Federal Freeze Act”.

5 **SEC. 2. FREEZE ON FEDERAL HIRING AND SALARIES.**

6 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

7 (1) AGENCY.—The term “agency” has the
8 meaning given the term in section 551 of title 5,
9 United States Code.

1 (2) BASELINE NUMBER.—The term “baseline
2 number” means, with respect to an agency, the
3 number of employees employed by the agency (in-
4 cluding individuals occupying full-time equivalent po-
5 sitions in the agency), as of the date of enactment
6 of this Act.

7 (3) EMPLOYEE.—The term “employee” means
8 an employee of an agency.

9 (b) GENERAL PROHIBITIONS.—Notwithstanding any
10 other provision of law or regulation, during the 1-year pe-
11 riod beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the
12 following shall apply:

13 (1)(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B),
14 the head of an agency may not increase the number
15 of employees employed by the agency beyond the
16 baseline number.

17 (B) During the 1-year period beginning on the
18 date of enactment of this Act, the head of an agency
19 may appoint an individual to a position within the
20 agency, even if appointing that individual would in-
21 crease the number of employees employed by the
22 agency beyond the baseline number, if the agency
23 head determines that—

(i) making that appointment serves the interest of law enforcement, public safety, or the national security of the United States; or

(ii) the individual so appointed is essential to respond to an emergency declared under section 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5191).

(2) The annual rate of basic pay of an employee, as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act, may not be increased.

(c) REDUCTION IN FORCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the head of each agency shall take such measures, without regard to any other provision of law or regulation, to ensure that—

(A) as of the date that is 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the number of employees employed by the agency is 2 percent less than the baseline number; and

(B) as of the date that is 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the number of employees employed by the agency is 5 percent less than the baseline number.

1 (2) EXEMPTION.—An employee who the head of
2 the employing agency determines serves the interest
3 of law enforcement, public safety, or the national se-
4 curity of the United States, or who is essential to re-
5 spond to an emergency declared under section 501
6 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emer-
7 gency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5191) (as deter-
8 mined by that agency head), shall not apply for the
9 purposes of determining the number of employees
10 employed by that agency under subparagraph (A) or
11 (B) of paragraph (1).

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