

AFL-CIO

LEGISLATIVE ALERT

March 12, 2024

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the AFL-CIO, I write to express our opposition to H.R. 6276, the Utilizing Space Efficiently and Improving Technologies Act of 2023 (the USE IT Act). The metrics mandated by this act fail to accurately measure occupancy of federal buildings and leased space in a manner that reflects the distinctive ways federal workers perform their duties to benefit the public.

While the USE IT Act aims to track, measure and report on occupancy rates of federal buildings and federally leased space, the yardstick used to measure federal building and leased space occupancy is overly broad and unlikely to accurately reflect occupancy rates and efficiencies. The USE IT Act requires the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the General Services Administration (GSA) to determine whether a federal agency meets a 60 percent or higher occupancy rate. The 60 percent metric does not relate to the mission of a federal agency, or how federal workers do their jobs to achieve that mission.

Many federal workers, such as inspectors, law enforcement officers, and engineers, split their time between fieldwork and federal buildings or federal leased space. Other federal workers have agreements with their agency for alternative workplace arrangements. The overly broad metric penalizes federal agencies and their staff for long term work arrangements that function well.

The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the importance of flexibility in how and where work was performed. Federal agencies had plans in place allowing federal workers in every state and the District of Columbia area to continue to serve the public during the pandemic, weather emergencies, or when federal buildings or leased spaces are inaccessible. The arbitrary 60 percent occupancy rate metric required by the USE IT Act makes it less likely that federal agencies and the workforce can continue to serve the public in an efficient and effective manner. I urge you to oppose the USE IT Act.

Sincerely,



William Samuel
Director, Government Affairs