



Social Security Relents and Agrees to Return to Bargaining Table With Judges' Union

*AALJ Calls it 'One of the Most Sweeping Awards in the History of
Federal Sector Labor Law'*

WASHINGTON — June 16, 2021 —The [Association of Administrative Law Judges](#) (AALJ) is claiming a monumental victory in its effort against Social Security Administration (SSA) leaders who were committed to eliminating their union of judges who preside in disability hearings.

SSA, after an arbitrator decided it committed numerous unfair labor practices and engaged in bad faith bargaining, was ordered back to the negotiating table to reach a new labor contract with the AALJ. Yesterday, SSA finally agreed to comply with the arbitrator's order.

Judge Melissa McIntosh, AALJ's president, says, "Social Security leaders sought to eliminate our union during the most anti-union era in the history of federal sector labor law; they put their names and reputations in support of aggressive union busting. Thankfully, these efforts failed. While Acting Social Security Commissioner Andrew Saul and Deputy Commissioner David Black could have directed officials under them to comply with federal labor law, they did not. We believe this is one of the most sweeping awards in the history of federal sector labor law."

McIntosh adds that AALJ will return to negotiations in good faith with a sincere resolve to reach an agreement.

The arbitration award means SSA now has no ability to enforce a Trump-era union-busting Federal Service Impasses Panel order that would have eliminated the AALJ. President Joe Biden, upon taking office, immediately fired members of the Panel.

While the AALJ repeatedly asked Saul and Black to abandon the union-busting Panel order, they refused; both are holdover appointees of the Trump administration. Numerous members of Congress have called for their removal, including Senator Sherrod Brown (Ohio) and the Congressional Progressive Caucus.

AALJ is a local of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers, AFL-CIO, and represents approximately 1,200 judges across 160 offices who preside in Social Security disability hearings across the country.

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A copy of Social Security Administration's arbitration compliance notice is available upon request.

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