# Spending Bill Would Block OPM Breakup, Address Other Issues

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The general government appropriations bill cleared by a House subcommittee would bar the administration from spending money to carry out the proposed OPM reorganization, in which the agency’s operation of the retirement and insurance programs would  move to a new office in GSA and its policy-making function to a new office in OMB.

The bill would ban both direct transfers of functions and contract-type agreements that could achieve the same goal without actually breaking up OPM.

Also included is language barring agencies from imposing contract terms on a union unless the terms had been agreed to in bargaining or ordered by an arbitrator, and that any contracts that have expired are to remain in full effect until a new one has been negotiated or awarded by an arbitrator. That could affect the moves by several agencies to change policies that had been in previous contracts—in areas such as telework, official time, alternative work schedules and more—without either an agreement or an arbitration award, moves that have triggered numerous legal complaints from unions.

The Trump administration likely will oppose the bill—and possibly threaten a veto—once it reaches readiness for a House floor vote. That likely won’t be for several weeks, since the measure has to go through the full Appropriations Committee first.

The bill also continues several provisions in similar measures for many years, including clauses to: bar agencies from conducting “Circular A-76” studies that can lead to contracting-out of federal jobs; generally require FEHB plans to cover prescription contraceptives but not cover abortion, with certain exceptions in both cases; bar agencies from conducting “lifestyle” related and other training not directly related to official job duties; and require reporting on spending on conferences and similar gatherings that exceed certain thresholds.