



The Importance of Official Time

Imagine that you're a correctional worker. Every day you wake up, get dressed, and leave your family knowing that you may never come back. But you keep going, because our communities know peace because of the work that you do. Now imagine if you're this same correctional worker, but suddenly you lose your ability to speak out against unsafe working conditions, that's what would happen if federal employees lost the ability to use official time. Due to internal security protocol official time is the only way correctional workers can highlight unsafe working conditions without compromising security.

The Council of Prison Locals have used official time to give a much-needed perspective to Members of Congress so that they are educated on the unique situations that arise for workers who spend their career protecting our country from dangerous criminals. Through official time the Council has told the story of Eric Williams, who was brutally murdered while supervising over 130 inmates by himself in a high security housing unit. Because lawmakers heard this story, we now have a second officer in all high security housing units and pepper spray for workers to protect themselves. We also successfully secured stab resistant vests for our members. Without official time these vital changes would never have been implemented.

Official time promotes a productive workforce, helps resolve differences, and keeps officers safe while on the job. Congress must protect this important workplace tool.



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