

Washington, DC (Dec. 19, 2012)—Today Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, applauded the House’s passage of the Hatch Act Modernization Act of 2012. Cummings [introduced](#) this legislation on March 7, 2012, with bipartisan support from Reps. Jason Chaffetz, Gerry Connolly, Danny Davis, Michael Fitzpatrick, Stephen Lynch, James Moran, Eleanor Holmes Norton, and Laura Richardson.

“I am thrilled that this bipartisan legislation was passed by the Senate and House and that it’s moving to the President’s desk,” said Cummings. “These reforms will make the Hatch Act more fair and more effective. This bill will allow state and local government employees, such as police officers, to run for office, and it will ensure that the punishment fits the crime by providing a range of penalties for Hatch Act violations instead of requiring employees to be fired.”

The Office of Special Counsel Carolyn Lerner [endorsed](#) the bill. “Fixing this broken law will cost taxpayers nothing, and will demonstrate respect for the independence of state and local elections,” she [said](#).

The Hatch Act Modernization Act of 2012:

- allows state and local government employees covered by the Hatch Act to run for political office;
- provides the Merit Systems Protection Board—the independent agency that adjudicates Hatch Act complaints—with flexibility to issue a range of penalties for Hatch Act violations instead of terminating employees absent unanimous action by the Board to reduce their penalties; and
- ensures that employees of the District of Columbia are treated similarly to employees of state and local government agencies under the Hatch Act.

The Senate unanimously [passed](#) its version of the bill, S. 2170, on November 30, 2012.

Ranking Member Cummings offered special thanks to House Oversight Committee Chairman Darrell Issa and Committee Member Jason Chaffetz for helping to bring the bill to the House floor today.