

February 16, 2025

Dear Representative Lofgren,

First, I want to say thank you for your email to your constituents about the abnormal situation this country finds itself in.

I, along with at least a half dozen of my colleagues (and friends) are recent casualties of the across-the-board terminations of probationary employees at the Sam Farr USDA-ARS Crop Improvement and Protection Center in Salinas. In my case and a couple of other cases, we found an email [REDACTED] in our inboxes on Valentines Day received at 6:00PM the evening before stating that:

"The Agency finds, based on your performance, that you have not demonstrated that your further employment would be in the public interest. For this reason, the Agency informs you that the Agency is removing you from your position of [REDACTED] with the Agency and the federal civil service effective close of business February 13, 2025."

The ham-handed, shoot-from-the-hip, disrespectful and dishonest method used to affect my termination is the most unprofessional, and I feel unlawful abuse of the employer-employee relationship I have ever experienced in my long career as a scientist and manager.

My employment at the research station since April 2024 has been a joy up to this point. I received an excellent Performance Appraisal [REDACTED] in September of 2024 which directly refutes the termination letter stating "based on your performance, that you have not demonstrated that your further employment at the Agency would be in the public interest".

I am a Vietnam era veteran with decades of corporate research and management experience. I sought out an employment opportunity in the new research station because I wanted to contribute this experience to the public sector. I started my career as a public servant in the United States Air Force (I volunteered, I wasn't drafted!) and my desire was to end my career as a public servant at the USDA.

I am not a combat hero, nor did I give my life or limb during my military service, but I am receiving veteran's disability for back and hearing problems suffered during my service. I have received nothing but the friendliest and most professional service from the VA and am extremely dismayed that many probationary employees at the VA are also suffering the same treatment I have received.

I seek your guidance on what I can do to see that this gross injustice does not go forward unchallenged and if possible, can be reversed so I can recover my position at the research station.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Respectfully,

[REDACTED]