



Why Aren't the Triumphant Contractors Taking Victory Laps Over In-sourcing?

By Matthew Weigelt June 24, 2011

The American Federation of Government Employees without a doubt disagreed with how a House subcommittee approached the contentious issue of insourcing.

Going into a hearing titled, "Insourcing Gone Awry: Outsourcing Small Business Jobs," the union may have thought everything would be stacked against it when its public policy director, Jacque Simon, arrived to testify June 23.

However, she was blunt with Rep. Mick Mulvaney (R-S.C.), chairman of the Small Business Committee's Contracting and Workforce Subcommittee, in her written testimony.

"AFGE could understand a hearing being held to raise serious questions about how [the Defense Department's] 'Efficiency Initiative' poorly serves taxpayers and warfighters by forcing work to be privatized or to remain privatized regardless of cost or sensitivity. Perhaps such a hearing could be entitled 'Historic Insourcing Reform Efforts in DOD Halted: Taxpayers Denied Savings, Warfighter Denied Better Services'? However, given this subcommittee's approach, as evidenced by its colorful title for today's hearing, that might be 'a bridge too far.'

Then why not a hearing during which triumphant contractors can take victory laps and boast about how they killed off insourcing, ensuring that DOD no longer follows its statutory requirement to even consider whether to insource contracts that cost too much, contractors that are poorly performed, contracts that were awarded without competition, or contracts that include functions too important or sensitive to have been privatized?"

Mulvaney said the subcommittee approached the hearing as it did because it's considering small business issues.

"We are here on the Small Business Committee to protect the interests of small business," Mulvaney said in his final statement during the hearing.

And the debate goes on.