

Stopping Home Office Work's Unproductive Problems (SHOW UP) Act

Sponsored by Senator Marsha Blackburn (TN)

Background: In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, employers across the nation drastically expanded telework. Since the pandemic ended, organizations have safely reopened and employees have returned to their worksites—that is, except for certain federal government employees. Using the pandemic experience as an excuse, the Biden Administration intends to permanently expand telework for federal employees with no concern for the possible impact on agency performance.

- According to the Office of Personnel Management's most recent report on telework, 47 percent of federal workers teleworked in Fiscal Year 2021, a two percent increase over Fiscal Year 2020, the year when the pandemic struck.
- According to a Federal Times report this past October, just one in three federal workers has returned to their office full-time.

Since President Biden took office, he has put the wishes and demands of federal workers before the needs of the American people. Members of Congress are well aware of the problems constituents have experienced getting help from the Social Security Administration; or veterans who cannot access their records.

It is a matter of good government to understand what the impact of telework has been before Congress makes it the norm. Congress should also focus on how telework would—or should—impact the amount of office space and property the federal government needs.

Summary: The “SHOW UP Act,” fixes this problem—preventing the Biden Administration from locking in higher levels of pandemic-era telework until it submits to Congress plans that will avoid the adverse effects of remote work. Specifically, the legislation requires:

- Federal agencies to return to 2019 pre-pandemic telework levels within 30 days;
- Federal agencies to complete and submit to Congress studies within six months detailing how pandemic-era telework levels impacted their missions—including adverse effects on customer service, network security, and costs for real property and locality pay; and
- Preventing federal agencies from permanently expanding telework without submitting to Congress telework plans certified by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) that detail how remote work policies will:
 - Substantially improve agency mission-performance;
 - Substantially lower agency costs for real property and locality pay;
 - Ensure security for agency networks, data and records;
 - Accelerate the dispersal of federal jobs across the nation and outside the Beltway.