

project

by The Law

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The Pendleton Civil Service Act of 1883

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U.S Civil Service and its Features

Upon its formulation, the act primarily established four primary features of the civil service that remain relevant up to date. At first, it passed the required public service examinations for federal jobs, including most federal government employees (90%) and postal workers. Secondly, workers must pass the tests to be absorbed into employment and must not to be fired for political or personal reasons. Again, the act made it illegal to demote (commonly known as taking away power) individuals based on any political pressure. Finally, it ended the patronage system (spoils system) of the government (Cole, 2017). All the four main features were coined to ensure that all government jobs were awarded by merit.

The feature of demanding civil service examination helps to ensure that only the qualified and civilized servants can have the intention of seeking any federal job in the U.S. The policy helps minimize cases of unqualified individual seeking federal jobs. Next, the element that requires one to pass the examination and provision of enough job security from being fired on political reasons helps to ensure that out of all those seeking certain federal jobs, only the qualified individuals that has passed the examination get employed (Knox, Adams, & Osho, 2017). Once absorbed into employment, the feature protects the civil servant from being terminated from their work on any other bases apart from the ones speculated by law. No individual can sack a public servant either due to political differences or with any other intention such as securing that employment to a family member.

Some senior public servants tend to demote other official on individual bases or political view. For instance, once a civil servant changes their political will, some officials tend to think of downgrading them as a way of punishing them. However, the feature of making demoting civil servants on either individual or political views protects all the U.S. civil servants

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to remain in their current position till when demoted or promoted on the legal basis (Cole, 2017).

Ending the patronage system was essential since it mitigated the practice of awarding the supporters of the winning parties a federal job or a specific position in the office. It also helped to end the fact that family members and friends of the running candidate would provide an extra opportunity for success (Cole, 2017). Lastly, stopping the system helped to ensure that the winners of the elections could only continue working for their respective parties rather than being provided with other federal jobs.

In my opinion, the feature of having the workers to pass a test to be employed and not be fired for political reasons best contributes to government efficiency, transparency, and democratic values. The feature helps by ensuring that all those hired have the necessary skills for the job. It also contributes to transparency value by providing that the hiring and firing process is systematic and open to all citizens. Lastly, it adds to the democratic values by ensuring that all citizens seeking employment have equal chances of being selected and once chosen cannot be fired on any other basis except those legalized (Knox, Adams, & Osho, 2017).

Given a chance to reform one feature, I would amend the element that illegalized demoting of individual on political bases. I would rebuild it also to limit promotions based on personal and political views to ensure that there is a legal reason for either demotion or promotion.

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References

Cole, J. P. (2017). The Civil Service Reform Act: Due Process and Misconduct-Related Adverse Actions.

2

Knox, R., Adams, M. O., & Osho, G. S. (2017). History and Relevance of Patronage, the Civil Service Reform and the Pendleton Act: The Rationale for Congressional Intervention. *Journal of Public Administration and Governance*, 7(2), 55-65.

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