

Civil Service Reform, 6/21/78

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June 21, 1978

TO: PRESIDENT CARTER
FROM: HAMILTON JORDAN *HJ*
RE: PUBLIC POSTURE ON CIVIL SERVICE REFORM

It is being reported that you have said in several meetings that the veterans preference issue is central to civil service reform and that if Congress deletes our veterans preference provision, they will have "gutted" our program.

Substantively, the veterans preference issue is a matter of access to the system. It is a critical issue but has nothing to do with the actual management of the government. Politically, it would be disastrous for us to get everything else we want in civil service reform (which would give us about 90% of the total package), yet have it said that we "lost" or have a "weak bill" if the veterans pre-

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ference issue is lost. Right now, the odds are against us. We should go all out on the floor to have it reinstated, but we should avoid characterizing it as "central" or "critical" to our entire civil service reform package. We should say that it is an important provision of the package that relates to the basic fairness and equity of the civil service system.

cc: Stu
Jody
Frank