

## Frequently asked questions

### Q: *What does joining CREA involve?*

Being a CREA member allows you to have a voice in your working conditions. Membership involves only what you want it to involve. If everyone steps up to help in small ways, however, such as providing input on policy or joining a committee, we can accomplish important things in serving Congress and making CRS a better place to work.

### Q: *What are the benefits of membership?*

You know that you have done your part. You have the right to vote to decide who will be CREA's officers, who represent us in formal negotiations. You also have the opportunity to provide input toward CREA's positions and strategy. In sum, you can help your colleagues in ways that make sense given your circumstances and talents. Eligible members may apply for support from CREA's Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program, a modest CREA fund that supports career-enhancing education.

### Q: *Will being a CREA member adversely affect my career advancement at CRS?*

No, that is prohibited under federal law. CREA is officially authorized to represent hundreds of CRS employees like you. Because CREA speaks on behalf of all bargaining unit employees, you can remain anonymous in these interactions.

### Q: *What are the dues toward CREA's costs?*

CREA dues are very low by employee association standards. They are 0.2% (0.002) of your salary. To share these costs among everyone who benefits from CREA's efforts, we encourage colleagues to step up, join, and provide input.

### Q: *What do my dues support?*

Dues are used to pay for legal advice in dispute resolution, a part-time professional to provide administrative support, affiliation costs, steward training, and similar expenses. Your dues do not go to political parties or politicians.

## Why join CREA? Working steadily toward results that matter.

The Congressional Research Employees Association (CREA) is a non-profit organization that officially represents more than 500 CRS professionals and staff who provide direct and indirect service to Congress. CREA is led by elected employee volunteers. The organization is authorized to engage in collective bargaining with CRS and the Library regarding workplace conditions, focusing especially on the quality and fairness of our workplace and matters that may enhance or hinder efforts of employees to provide effective service to Congress.

[www.creaunion.org/about/crea-accomplishments/](http://www.creaunion.org/about/crea-accomplishments/)

CREA seeks to ensure that the perspectives of employees are solicited, heard, and considered when administrators and managers evaluate how to serve Congress. In this way, CREA presents the perspective, collective voice, and deep expertise of CRS's employees. We negotiate for effective and fair policies, procedures, and practices that have direct implications for service to Congress. For example, CREA's achievements include **telework**, **day care**, **credit hours**, and **complex** (compressed work schedules). CREA is working to ensure that managers apply processes like promotion and appraisal validly and fairly.

## Contact

If you have questions or wish to join, please contact us at [crea@crs.loc.gov](mailto:crea@crs.loc.gov).



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(Revised October 2014)



## Congressional Research Employees Association

**Congressional Research Service (CRS),  
U.S. Library of Congress**

### *Professionalism, Integrity, Service*

**An employee association within the  
Congressional Research Service, dedicated to  
ensuring that CRS is a quality and fair  
workplace and that CRS employees are  
supported effectively to pursue the agency's  
mission of providing nonpartisan, expert, and  
authoritative analysis and information to  
Members and committees of Congress**



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## In brief: why join CREA?

CREA is run by the employees at CRS. As a CREA member, you will be able to shape our policies and goals, as well as run and vote for our elected leadership. Because CREA acts on your behalf, you can safely provide input and remain anonymous in these interactions. Although CREA represents all bargaining unit members – whether members of CREA or not – your membership ensures we can remain a viable organization ready to represent everyone. Even if you choose not to be an active participant with your time, your dues will support CREA and your membership will show management that we have the support of CRS staff.

## What is CREA?

CREA is the organization that represents close to 500 employees here at CRS. We have represented CRS workers since 1976 and have maintained one of the highest membership rates in the federal sector. CREA represents all workers in CRS – analysts, attorneys, clerical staff, information professionals, library technicians, and technical staff. Only supervisors, managers, and confidential employees are excluded. Since 1976, CREA has negotiated four Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs), which cover topics ranging from workplace conditions to promotion. The current CBA, signed in 2014, is posted on our website.



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## Can joining and getting involved in CREA improve CRS and advance my career?

Yes. CREA is us, the employees. As such, our goal is not merely to be successful in our careers, but to have CRS be seen as a vital asset for Congress. It is in our interest and Congress's interest to advocate for improvements and hold our leaders accountable to our agency's mission. We have worked steadily toward results that matter, including **telework**, **day care**, **complex**, and **credit hours**, and at times successfully persuading CRS **what not to do**.

Those who carry out the daily work of CRS have an interest in ensuring it is done effectively and with integrity. Through CREA, we address issues both proactively and when they arise. Through CREA, we pool our extensive expertise and good ideas. We gain the ability to **safely** take on

issues as a group with immediate supervisors and their supervisors.

Our goal is to find solutions that represent a win-win for all parties. We also are here to help protect employees against arbitrary actions, reprisals, and poor management behaviors. If you choose, a CREA representative can be there with you in certain kinds of discussions between you and management. If you need it, CREA can help if red tape gets in the way.

## How can I become a member of CREA?

It's easy. Simply fill out an OPM payroll deduction form. A copy is on our website, at [creaunion.org/join-crea/](http://creaunion.org/join-crea/). Return it to any CREA representative, or drop it off at the CREA office (LM-412). If you would like someone from CREA to pick it up or to answer any of your questions privately, e-mail us at [crea@crs.loc.gov](mailto:crea@crs.loc.gov) or call and leave a voicemail at 7-7636.

## What is IFPTE?

CREA is a local affiliate of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE). IFPTE is an advocate for thousands of federal employees nationwide. IFPTE membership includes engineers, scientists, accountants, technicians, analysts, and attorneys at many federal agencies.