

Members of the Government Efficiency Committee

Although I enjoy seeing my co-workers every six months at our large unit meeting, I would much prefer to remain working from home for several reasons. First, working in the PRC can be very stressful with the subject matter we deal with daily. Working from home allows me to have the ability to listen to music in my home office. Listening to music provides a calming influence and can relieve stress levels. My home office is much calmer than the PRC. No ringing phones in the background. I don't have to listen to other workers talking on the phone. An added benefit of working from home is if I become stressed, (usually from KIPS), I can yell and scream at my computer and no one hears me. But seriously, my home office is just a much nicer environment for me.

My second concern is the commute. I live in Lawrence and I used to travel daily to Topeka. It is thirty-five miles one way so I used to travel seventy miles daily. Thus, I was putting at least 350 miles on my car weekly. An annual basis this was over 18,000 miles. I have put tens of thousands of miles on my vehicle for the daily commute to Topeka. I had to fill up my vehicle on a weekly basis. The amount of gas I was paying to commute to work added up substantially. Furthermore, I was paying approximately \$40 per month for Turnpike Fees. That's nearly \$500 annually for Turnpike fees. Since we began working from home in 2020, I have saved a lot of money. This is now disposable income I can use to stimulate the economy by going out to eat at restaurants, etc.

The third point I have is that I am getting older. I am now 63 years old and nearing retirement. With telecommuting I could easily stay in my position another six to seven years or possibly longer. If the return to the office mandate is implemented, I would have to seriously think about retiring earlier than I had planned. I don't want to be making a long commute in my late sixties.

The fourth point is concerns for my health. I have Type II Diabetes, (which is controlled). I don't want to be in an office environment where illnesses spread easily. Since working from home in 2020, I have rarely become ill. I would like to do as much as possible to remain healthy. Returning to work in the office would place me and others at risk of sickness. I also have significant hearing loss and am now using hearing aids. I fear working in the office, my hearing aids would magnify the noise level in the room.

My last point concerns my productivity while working from home. I believe my productivity is just as good if not better than when I was working in the office. A happy employee is a productive employee.

Sincerely,

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