

VA Protest 2

DJB

9/7/20(TuesAM)

While Labor Day traditionally celebrates the legacy of trade unions and the larger labor movement in the U-S, some union members in Arkansas say they're not being afforded proper protections by the federal government during the coronavirus pandemic. Members of the American Federation of Government Employees' National V-A Council are continuing to hold protests across the country calling for a new contract between workers in the Department of Veterans Affairs and V-A Secretary Robert Wilkie. Barbara Whitson-Casanova is a registered nurse with the V-A and the president of the union's Local 2054.

News03

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"...those types of things."

Whitson-Casanova says her union is seeking more coronavirus-related protections for frontline V-A healthcare workers, such as updated leave policies, increased hazard pay and greater access to personal protective equipment, or P-P-E. She says, because the V-A is a federal government organization, its workers are not afforded the same protections as healthcare workers in the private sector.

News04

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"...ultimately our veterans."

Members of the American Federation of Government Employees Local 2054 held a socially-distant protest in North Little Rock yesterday (Mon). The A-F-G-E is the largest union representing federal government employees and represents more than 270-thousand V-A workers across the country.