

July 14, 2010

United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator:

The undersigned organizations, representing millions of federal, state and local government workers and retirees, urge you to resist any attempt to cut or freeze federal civilian employee pay for 2011.

Freezing or cutting federal civilian employee pay would significantly impair the ability of federal agencies to carry out their critical missions by harming recruitment and retention efforts, particularly as increasing numbers of employees retire in the next few years. In addition, freezing or cutting pay would burden federal employees and their families, who already are facing financial challenges in our strained economy.

Federal employees perform a great number of critical services for the American people. Civilian federal employees guard our nation's borders; care for our cherished veterans; take care of our national parks and forests; ensure the safety of our skies; maintain our homeland security; and work side-by-side with our military in Iraq, Afghanistan, and around the world. Over half of the civilian federal workforce is employed by the Departments of Defense, Homeland Security, and Veterans Affairs.

The rationale for freezing or cutting pay is vague and often based on misinformation. Given the disruption in federal services it would cause, it is uncertain that it would result in significant savings. Nor is it clear why federal civilian employees should be singled out, particularly since there is no evidence that federal civilian employees are paid more than workers in the private sector. In fact, the most recent analysis by the Bureau of Labor Statistics demonstrates that federal workers are paid 22 percent *less* than private sector workers performing the same jobs. The President's Pay Agent for the last three years – during both Republican and Democratic administrations – has acknowledged that the pay gap between federal and private sector workers has exceeded 22 percent.

Federal employees are experiencing many of the same financial challenges as others struggling through these difficult economic times. Federal employees have seen their retirement accounts shrink, have children who have moved back home after college, and have family members out of work or underemployed. Additional pay cuts or a pay freeze would be burdensome to federal employees and their families as well as to the communities where they reside.

Again, we strongly urge you to resist any attempt to cut or freeze federal civilian workers' pay for 2011. Thank you for your time and consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

American Federation of Government Employees
American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees
American Foreign Service Association
American Postal Workers Union
FAA Managers Association
Federal Managers Association
International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers
Laborers International Union of North America

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association
National Air Traffic Controllers Association
National Association of Letter Carriers
National Association of Postal Supervisors
National Association of Postmasters of the US
National Council of Social Security Management Associations
National Federation of Federal Employees
National League of Postmasters
National Postal Mail Handlers Union
National Rural Letter Carriers' Association
National Treasury Employees Union
Professional Aviation Safety Specialists
Professional Managers Association
Senior Executives Association