



National Federation of Federal Employees, IAMAW, AFL-CIO



NFFE-IAM Opposes Efforts to Cut or Freeze Federal Workers' Pay

Position: Numerous pieces of legislation have been introduced in the 112th Congress to cut or freeze federal workers' pay. Federal employees have already incurred \$75 billion in cuts to their pay and retirement security within the last two years. Despite the fact that federal workers make an average of 26% less than private sector workers doing the same jobs, federal employees are still being targeted for cuts. NFFE-IAM strongly opposes these unfair proposals that aim to place a disproportionate amount of our nation's debt burden on federal workers like VA nurses and doctors, U.S. Border Patrol agents, and USDA food inspectors. The President's budget proposal asked for just a 0.5 percent pay adjustment for federal employees in 2013.

There are numerous pieces of legislation introduced in the 112th Congress designed to substantially reduce or eliminate federal worker pensions. Here are several examples of bills that attack federal workers' pay that NFFE-IAM strongly opposes:

H.R. 3835 (Duffy, R-WI) – would extend pay freeze for an additional year through 2013.

H.R. 3844 (Roby, R-AL) - would suspend within grade step increases through the end of FY 2012.

H.R. 408 (Jordan, R-OH) – would extend federal pay freeze through 2015 and repeal the prohibition on contracting out of federal jobs.

S. 2079 (Heller, R-NV) – would extend the freeze on federal employee pay through 2015.

S. 1936 (Johnson, R-WI) – would extend the freeze on federal employee pay from the current two years to five years.

S. 178 (DeMint, R- SC) – would freeze federal pay through 2015 and slash hiring by the federal government.

Contrary to numerous myths contrived by non-government sources about federal employee compensation, federal workers are not overpaid; they are significantly underpaid compared to workers performing the same jobs in the private sector. Based on data collected by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and reported by the Office of Personnel Management, private sector workers continue to have a significant salary advantage over federal employees. This advantage grew an additional two percentage points to 26 percent in 2011 due to the pay freeze that is in place.

While false reports of inflated federal compensation and a broad focus on deficit reduction have led to forceful calls by some lawmakers to reduce federal pay, history shows that the underlying rationale for reducing federal compensation – that federal workers are overpaid – is not based in fact. In every year of the last decade, regardless of political party, the administration in office has acknowledged a double-digit pay discrepancy between federal employees and higher-paid private sector workers. In fact, in President George W. Bush's last year in office, the President's Pay Agent certified a 23% percent pay gap.

To keep our country on a sustainable path forward, we need to preserve policies that attract and retain the best American workers. Freezing or cutting pay sends the wrong signal to the best and brightest workers federal agencies need to recruit and retain in order to continue to provide quality services to the American people.

Federal employees are doing their part to lower government costs, and have already made sacrifices by accepting a two-year pay freeze, a sacrifice that will cost the average federal employee approximately \$30,000 over the course of their careers.

NFFE-IAM opposes proposals to freeze federal employee pay for additional years. NFFE-IAM also opposes other attempts to effectively freeze federal pay, like suspending within grade step increases.