



April 18, 2018

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the National Treasury Employees Union, which represents over 150,000 federal employees in 32 agencies, I urge you to ensure that federal workers receive a fair pay raise in 2019.

In his Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 Budget Request, the President called for a pay freeze for federal workers despite a growing economy and private sector wage growth. If the federal government is to have the ability to compete with the private sector in recruiting and retaining a skilled workforce, it is essential that the federal government provide its workers a pay increase. The federal government relies on a qualified and professional workforce to carry out our nation's laws and programs. Federal employees — who live and work in every state and congressional district across the country — serve as scientists, accountants, park rangers, law enforcement officers, and much more — providing critical services for our nation and the American people.

Lagging federal pay rates have taken a toll on federal employees and their families over the last decade as their pay raises have fallen below private sector salary increases, owing to a three year pay freeze and five subsequent years of below-market pay raises that were lower than the amounts called for under current law. Like all American workers and middle-class taxpayers, federal employees face ever-increasing costs of living, with rising utility, health care and food bills, along with school loan and rent or mortgage obligations. All federal employees deserve an adequate pay raise that is comparable to increases for their private-sector counterparts. In 2018, private sector wages on average are rising by 3 percent.

If not for the President's decision to implement a pay freeze, the Federal Employee Pay Comparability Act (5 USC 5303) indicates that federal employees should receive a 2.1 percent pay raise in January 2019, prior to any amount being provided for locality pay rate increases. In turn, Representative Gerry Connolly (D-VA) and Senator Brian Schatz (D-HI) have introduced the Federal Adjustment of Income Rates (FAIR) pay legislation, H.R. 4775 and S. 2295, calling for a 3 percent pay adjustment for 2019 for federal workers covered by the General Schedule and Wage Grade systems. We strongly support this legislation.

Prior to 2011, Congress routinely set the federal pay increase in the annual Financial Services and General Government appropriations bill. Only in the last few years has Congress remained silent, leaving the decision of whether to grant or to set the amount of a federal pay increase to the President. Given the President's announcement, it is imperative that Congress

reassert its authority and provide federal workers a fair pay increase in the FY19 Financial Services and General Government appropriations bill. Federal employees and their families are relying on you to act to ensure their financial security.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anthony M. Reardon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A' and a long, sweeping underline.

Anthony M. Reardon
National President