

AFGE



# 10 Things Federal Government Employees Want You to Know



1

We are the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE). We come from all walks of life and work in many different government agencies.



2

We proudly serve the American people as law enforcement officers, food inspectors, nurses, correctional officers, park rangers, scientists, and nearly every type of job that makes up our economy.



3

Federal employees have already sacrificed \$246 billion for deficit reduction since 2011.



4

More than 623,000 veterans work in civilian federal jobs (comprising 31% of all federal civilian employees).



5

85% of us live and work outside the Washington, D.C. area.



6

We're middle class Americans. AFGE members take home an average of \$500 per week.



7

Many of us could make more in the private sector, but we choose to serve our country.



8

While the U.S. population has nearly doubled since 1960, the number of us working in government has stayed the same.



9

We're the government's most cost-efficient and effective workforce, costing about a third less than private contractors.



10

We take an oath to defend the Constitution and the public interest. Unlike contractors, we answer only to the American people.

To learn more about the federal workers in your state or District please contact AFGE at [afgelegislatedepartment@afge.org](mailto:afgelegislatedepartment@afge.org).



# Legislative Priorities

## Oppose Further Reductions in Compensation:

Federal employees have forfeited \$246 billion in pay and retirement benefits for deficit reduction and other budget priorities. The American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO (AFGE) strongly opposes the elimination of the Federal Employee Retirement (FERS) defined benefit. We also oppose any measure that raises premiums for our health insurance or converts FEHBP into a voucher. AFGE categorically opposes replacing the GS pay system with one that reallocates payroll away from rank-and-file working class employees to managers and supervisors under the heading of “pay for performance.” The GS system’s only real problem is lack of funding to provide market rates. Replacing the GS system, which is based on market comparability, with one that allows subjectivity and discrimination, is a recipe for corruption. AFGE urges Congress to support a 3% pay raise for 2019, and a repeal of the retirement system cuts affecting those hired after 2013.

## Oppose Attacks on Civil Service Protections:

AFGE strongly opposes anti-federal employee bills like H.R. 3257, the “PAGE Act” and H.R. 559, the “MERIT Act” which would make it easy to fire federal employees for any reason or no reason. Other bills that have been introduced would allow agencies to retroactively take away earned pensions and bonuses, curtail notice and appeal rights, keep reprimands in personnel files permanently and lengthen probation (during which time the employee is at-will). During the 115th Congress, AFGE also opposes exercise of the Holman rule, which allows any Representative to offer an amendment to cut or even eliminate the salary of any federal worker during floor consideration of appropriations bills. This campaign against the apolitical, merit-based civil service, disguised as a campaign against bad federal employees, is actually an attack on the only system that guarantees accountability from federal agencies. Our civil service system protects both employees and the public from politicization, corruption and cronyism. If these protections are weakened, federal service will be less accountable and more of a spoils system. AFGE urges Congress to oppose any effort to undermine America’s civil service system and federal employee rights.

## Oppose Efforts to Undermine Union Representation:

AFGE strongly opposes any legislation that eliminates the employee’s option to choose voluntary dues deduction or the use of reasonable time for representation during the work day. AFGE urges you to oppose any restriction on 1) voluntary payroll dues deduction and 2) agencies’ ability to negotiate for a reasonable amount of time for union representation. Within the federal government, joining the union is always voluntary, yet federal unions have a legal obligation to represent all members of a bargaining unit. The amount of time allowed for specific representation duties is based on an agreement between management and the union. Those who choose to join can also authorize an electronic payroll deduction for their dues, just like health insurance, TSP or donations to the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). AFGE urges Congress to reject any legislative attempts to erode or eliminate federal employees’ right to official time or voluntary payroll dues deduction.