



# Tips to Remember for Your Congressional Meeting:

- ✓ Remember to tell them what installation you work for in what city
- ✓ Tell them what you do for their constituents
- ✓ Remember to tell them if you are a veteran
- ✓ Remind them that 623,000 veterans work in civilian federal jobs
- ✓ Remind them that 85% of us live and work outside of Washington, D.C.
- ✓ Remind them that \$246 billion has already been taken for deficit reduction since 2011
- ✓ Stay on topic
- ✓ It's ok to say "I don't know", you can always direct them to the Legislative Department
- ✓ Never leave the office without making the ask
- ✓ Don't talk about elections
- ✓ Report back on your congressional visit through the app

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.