



Dr. Everett B. Kelley
National Secretary-Treasurer

J. David Cox, Sr.
National President

Jeremy A. Lannan
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384352

November 28, 2018

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the more than 700,000 federal and District of Columbia employees represented by the American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO (AFGE) I write to urge you: (1) to work keep the government open and operating after the December 7 expiration of the current Continuing Resolution (CR); and (2) to support the 1.9 percent pay adjustment for civilian federal employees agreed to in the FY 2019 Senate Financial Services appropriations bill.

Government shutdowns, partial or otherwise, have a negative impact not only on federal employees who are either forced to work without a paycheck for the duration of the funding lapse, or else locked out of their jobs altogether. These shutdowns also undermine and disrupt the operations of affected agencies and programs, and thereby hurt all citizens who rely upon the services, support and protection these federal operations routinely provide. As such, I urge you to resist efforts by those who would use a government shutdown as leverage to pass divisive, unpopular legislation. Shutting down the government should not be the way we resolve disputes over controversial policies.

We also strongly urge you to pass the 1.9 percent pay adjustment for 2019 that was included in the Senate FY 2019 Financial Services and General Government appropriations bill. We urge you to support this modest pay adjustment which has bipartisan support in both the House and Senate. The Federal Pay Comparability Act (FEPCA), which provides for a two-part pay adjustment, has been ignored by the administration. For 2019, FEPCA would provide a 2.1 percent nationwide adjustment plus additional adjustments that vary by locality. President Trump has proposed ignoring this law altogether by freezing pay for 2019. There has also been no deference to the long tradition of military-civilian pay raise parity. Next year, military personnel will receive a 2.6 percent adjustment while the much smaller 1.9 percent for civilians remains in limbo.

Federal employees are working and middle-class Americans who live mostly from paycheck to paycheck. They took a beating in the years following the financial crisis of 2008 and are still a long way from regaining the purchasing power of their pre-crisis paychecks. They have had pay freezes, retirement cuts, and unpaid furloughs. They have continued throughout to work hard to provide services to veterans, warfighters, Social Security recipients and victims of natural disasters, all because they are enormously devoted to the missions of their agencies.

Federal employees and their families deserve better than shutdowns and pay freezes, especially at a moment when the economy is so strong and private sector pay is accelerating. As you negotiate over funding for the agencies and programs not covered by enacted appropriations for 2019, please keep federal employees at the front of your mind. They are America's workforce, devoted to the public good, asking only to be able to continue to perform their jobs for the American people and being paid a fair salary for doing so.

Sincerely,

J. David Cox, Sr.
National President

