



# Tips to Remember for Your Congressional Meeting:

**This is intended for you. Please do not give to Congressional staff.**

- ✓ 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 637,000 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 from federal employees for deficit reduction since 2011.
- ✓ Stay on topic.
- ✓ It's ok to say "I don't know". You can always direct them to the AFGE Legislative Department.
- ✓ Never leave the office without making a specific request.
- ✓ 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 [afgelegislativedepartment@afge.org](mailto:afgelegislativedepartment@afge.org).



# LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

## 1. Federal Employee Pay

This is the year to finally begin to make a dent in the persistent pay gap between federal and private sector workers performing the same types of jobs. We're asking Congress to approve a nationwide adjustment of 4% which follows the formula in the law, plus an additional 3.4% that will vary by locality. By law, federal salaries were supposed to be within 5% of market comparability by now but the average gap is still 27%. This two-part adjustment, totaling 7.4% is a partial offset of inflation, health insurance costs, and a decade of minimal or no pay raises. AFGE supports H.R. 7127 and S. 3688 the FAIR Act. We're also fighting the Holman Rule, which allows appropriations amendments that target the pay of individual workers and programs.

## 2. Collective Bargaining Rights

Transportation Security Officers at TSA and Title 38 employees at the Department of Veterans Affairs need the same guaranteed collective bargaining rights as other federal employees. No group of federal employees should be singled out for inferior rights or pay. AFGE supports the VA Correct Compensation Act (H.R. 6538) and full collective bargaining rights for TSOs and passage of the Fund the TSA Act (H.R. 3394).

## 3. Full-Year Government Funding

Defense readiness, veterans' healthcare, Social Security, environmental protection, prison safety and many other important programs are harmed by using continuing resolutions based on a previous year's budget. Threatening government shutdowns and debt defaults should be eliminated as legislative tactics. The federal government needs Congress to provide regular full-year appropriations so that agencies can carry out their missions as the law intends and serve the American public. AFGE opposes all attempts to manufacture crises in order to extract cuts that would never otherwise win support of the Congress.

## 4. Stop the Fiscal Commission's Agenda of Cuts to Social Security, Medicare & Federal Employee Compensation

Budget policies are properly in the domain of the budget, appropriations, and tax committees of Congress. They should not be handed off to a separate commission made up of outside "experts" and lawmakers whose recommendations would be subject to only an up or down vote by Congress with no amendments allowed. Such commissions have a terrible track record of endorsing ruinous cuts to Social Security, Medicare, and federal employee pay and benefits. Social Security's long-term solvency is better addressed by the Social Security 2100 Act, which strengthens the program, improves benefits, and guarantees solvency. We strongly oppose H.R. 5779.

## 5. Full-staffing and America's Human Infrastructure

AFGE urges Congress to support fully staffing federal agencies, especially chronically understaffed agencies in law enforcement under the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security and at the Department of Veterans Affairs. AFGE also endorses paid family leave for all workers, including federal workers. We urge passage of legislation that guarantees 12 weeks of paid leave for all purposes under the Family and Medical Leave Act.

## 6. Federal Voting Rights

AFGE supports legislation that restores voting protections and ensures the integrity of elections, no matter what kind of voter suppression or election subversion is passed by state legislatures. Every voter must have access to the ballot box and states must be prevented from enacting harsh limits on early and mail-in voting. People of color, employees with irregular work schedules, and people with disabilities or family obligations are disenfranchised when early voting and mail-in voting are restricted.

## 7. Protect Federal Jobs and the Integrity of the Professional, Non-Political Civil Service

The integrity of the non-political civil service is undermined when Congress allows agency managers to evade competitive service hiring and eliminate veterans' preference in hiring. Congress needs to place strict limits on "excepted service" and "direct hire" authorities that open the door to politicization and corruption of the civil service. The real reason agencies have difficulty hiring is inadequate pay, and non-competitive hiring doesn't begin to fix the problem.