



June 21, 2016

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the five million federal and postal employees and retirees represented by the undersigned organizations, we write to urge you to support federal employees by cosponsoring S. 2699, the Federal Adjustment of Income Rates Act of 2016, (FAIR ACT) introduced by Senators Brian Schatz (D-HI) and Ben Cardin (D-MD). This legislation proposes a 5.3 percent pay increase for federal employees in 2017.

Studies have shown that federal wages and salaries continue to lag those in the private sector and state and local government when the comparison is made on a job-to-job basis. Federal employees are underpaid whether they are physicians working at the National Institutes of Health, FAA staff and air traffic managers, engineers, scientists, lawyers, or administrative workers and Department of Defense civilians supporting our military. Over the last six years, through pay freezes, small raises and increased worker contributions to retirement benefits, federal employees have sacrificed what will amount to \$182 billion in compensation over ten years; a number that will continue to grow because all the cuts were permanent.

“Over the past six years, federal employee wages increased 3.3 percent, while private-sector wages rose 11.3 percent, the cost of living increased 9.2 percent and premiums for the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) rose 20 percent. Federal employees paid under the General Schedule (GS) system received a base salary increase of 1 percent in 2016, and locality rates rose for the first time in six years by an average of just 0.3 percent. The 5.3 percent pay increase proposed by the FAIR Act is based on the difference between the combined federal pay adjustments that federal employees received between 2013 and 2016, and the amount they should have received under the Federal Employees Pay Comparability Act (FEPCA).

At a time when we need to recruit the best and brightest to civil service, federal pay is falling further behind the private sector and living standards for federal employees and their families continue to decline. A catch-up raise to reflect market rates in 2017 is imperative. The FAIR Act will take politics out of federal pay and provide federal agencies with help in recruitment and retention, and federal employees with a much needed pay increase of 5.3 percent after years of pay freezes and meager increases. Please cosponsor S. 2699, the FAIR Act.

Questions can be directed to our Coalition Chairman, Alan Lopatin at Alan@ledgercounsel.com or by phone at 202-487-4800.

Thank you,

American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE)
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
American Postal Workers' Union (APWU)
FAA Managers Association (FAAMA)
Federal Managers Association (FMA)
International Federation of Professional & Technical Engineers (IFPTE)
Laborers International Union of North America (LIUNA)
National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE)
National Air Traffic Controller Association (NATCA)
National Association of Federal Veterinarians (NAFV)
National Association of Government Employees (NAGE)
National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC)
National Association of Postal Supervisors (NAPS)
National Council of Social Security Management Associations (NCSSMA)
National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE)
National Rural Letter Carriers' Association (NRLCA)
National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU)
National Weather Service Employees Organization (NWSEO)
Organization of Professional Employees of the U.S. Dept of Agriculture (OPEDA)
Patent Office Professional Association (POPA)
Professional Aviation Safety Specialists, AFL-CIO (PASS)
Professional Managers Association (PMA)
Senior Executives Association (SEA)