

IMPROVING FEDERAL EMPLOYEE PAY

Lagging federal pay rates have taken a toll on federal employees and their families over the last few years, with their pay raises trailing increases to private sector wages. Like all American workers and middle-class taxpayers, federal employees face ever-increasing utility, health care, food, and college bills, and have rent and mortgage obligations.

According to private-sector wage data from the Department of Labor's Employment Cost Index, private industry wages increased on average 10.4% over the last 5 years, compared to an overall increase of 6.9% for federal workers in this same time period, barely keeping ahead of inflation. Recent extended pay freezes (in 2011, 2012, and 2013) and reduced pay adjustments (in 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018), coupled with congressional action to dramatically increase retirement contributions for new federal employees in both 2012 and 2013, have already resulted in federal employees contributing approximately \$200 billion toward deficit reduction as scored over ten years.

Ongoing pay trends in the private-sector marketplace point to an average base pay increase of 3% in 2018 for private-sector workers, as reported by the Society for Human Resource Management, World at Work, and Willis Towers Watson. Federal employees need to be provided with pay raises that ensure a professional, skilled workforce is onboard administering our nation's laws and programs. Federal employees—who live and work in every state and congressional district across the country—serve as scientists, accountants, park rangers, and law enforcement officers—providing critical services for our nation and the American people.

Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-VA) and Sen. Brian Schatz (D-HI) have introduced the Federal Adjustment of Income Rates (FAIR) pay bill, H.R. 4775 and S. 2295, calling for a 3% adjustment for 2019 for federal workers covered by the General Schedule and Wage Grade systems. NTEU believes that all federal employees, regardless of pay system and employing agency, deserve an adequate pay raise that is comparable to increases for their private-sector counterparts. And, the federal government must have an equitable and transparent pay system that does not cherry-pick certain occupations, or fail to provide raises for certain agencies or group of employees.

NTEU urges:

- **Support for Congressman Connolly's and Senator Schatz's pay bills— H.R. 4775 and S. 2295— that provide a 3% pay adjustment for 2019.**
- **Support for adequate and equitable pay raises, regardless of pay system and employing agency.**