

Richard G. Thissen
National President



Jon Dowie
National Secretary/Treasurer

August 24, 2018

Brenda L. Roberts
Deputy Associate Director
Pay and Leave
Employee Services
U.S. Office of Personnel Management
1900 E Street NW, Room 7H31
Washington, DC 20415-8200

Dear Deputy Associate Director Roberts,

On behalf of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE), I write to support the recommendations of the Federal Salary Council to the President's Pay Agent for January 2019, with respect to estimated locality rates for January 2019; the establishment or modification of pay localities; and the level of comparability payments for January 2019.

Locality pay is designed to reduce the gap between base General Schedule salaries and the average non-federal salaries in a given locality, as estimated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Adequate locality pay rates are critical to ensuring federal pay is competitive enough to recruit and retain a well-qualified and high-performing workforce. The doctors and nurses who care for our veterans, the cybersecurity professionals tasked with protecting critical infrastructure and responding to emerging threats, NASA engineers, NIH scientists, federal law enforcement and intelligence officers, prosecutors and judges; these individuals, and many more of those who comprise our federal workforce, require adequate compensation or we risk losing their talents.

The locality pay rates proposed by recommendation #1 would substantially reduce the pay disparity that exists between federal and non-federal salaries within the various localities. As such, NARFE endorses this recommendation. It would greatly improve recruitment and retention throughout the federal workforce. At this time, we do not comment on the Council's plan to review and discuss the current salary survey methodology – we will withhold such comments for a later date.

NARFE also endorses recommendations 2, 3 and 4. These recommendations would ensure federal employees in specific areas are provided more adequate locality pay to reflect the labor market conditions in those areas.

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

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Thank you for providing me the opportunity to share NARFE's views. If you have any questions or comments regarding this letter, please contact NARFE Staff Vice President, Advocacy, Jessica Klement at 703-838-7760 or jklement@narfe.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard Thissen".

Richard G. Thissen
National President