

Kenneth J. Thomas
National President



Kathryn E. Hensley
National Secretary/Treasurer

January 29, 2019

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 5 million federal employees, retirees and their survivors represented by the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE), I urge you to support H.R. 790, the Federal Civilian Workforce Pay Raise Fairness Act of 2019, which the House of Representatives will vote on tomorrow. This bill would override the federal employee pay freeze currently in effect by increasing federal pay rates by 2.6 percent for calendar year 2019.

On the heels of the longest shutdown in America's history, which forced more than 800,000 federal employees to lend the federal government two past-due paychecks, this measure is a modest start towards showing our nation's public servants the respect they deserve. It does so simply by providing hard-working middle-class federal employees a pay increase based on recent increases in private-sector pay, and on par with the pay raise provided to uniformed service members in 2019.

With employee morale for many agencies depressed by the 35-day shutdown, in addition to facing a more evident and real risk of a repeat in less than three weeks, it is particularly important to provide a market-rate raise this year. Federal pay rates must be competitive 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 who make up our federal workforce, require adequate compensation or we risk losing their talents.

Without congressional action, nearly 2 million federal workers across the country – the vast majority of whom (about 85 percent) work outside of the Washington, DC metropolitan area – will remain in a pay freeze this year. In the midst of a strong economy and increasingly competitive labor markets, the federal pay freeze will only exacerbate recruitment and retention challenges for the most in-demand federal occupations.

For these reasons, I urge you to support H.R. 790, the Federal Civilian Workforce Pay Raise Fairness Act, when it is brought to the House floor tomorrow. If you have any questions or concerns, or would like to discuss this issue in more depth, please contact NARFE Staff Vice President for Advocacy Jessica Klement at jklement@narfe.org or 571-483-1264.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Thomas', is written over a white background.

Ken Thomas
National President

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

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