

Richard G. Thissen
National President



Jon Dowie
National Secretary/Treasurer

March 9, 2016

House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government
B-300 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Crenshaw, Ranking Member Serrano and Members of the Subcommittee:

On behalf of the five million federal employees, retirees and their survivors represented by the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE), I respectfully request that you include a meaningful 3.9 percent increase to federal employee pay rates in the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2017.

In the past six years, federal employees have endured a three-year pay freeze and three years of limited raises for a total wage increase of only 3.3 percent. Meanwhile, private-sector wages and salaries have increased by 11.3 percent over the past six years, and the cost of living has increased by 9.2 percent. New federal employees also now pay an additional 3.6 percent more toward their retirement than their predecessors, without any added benefit. Further, hundreds of thousands of federal employees lost significant income, to the tune of \$1 billion, due to sequestration-related furloughs, and many more suffered through the uncertainty and disruption of an extended and unnecessary government shutdown.

The President's FY17 budget calls for a 1.6 percent pay increase. However, a modest 3.9 percent pay raise would begin to make up for the past six years of sacrifice by our nation's dedicated public servants. It also will make the government more competitive in the hiring process. With the numerous challenges facing this country, now is not the time to make public service less attractive to potential employees.

Without competitive pay, the federal government will fail to recruit and retain the best and brightest into public service. We rely on these men and women to take criminals off our streets and keep them behind bars, assist our military at home and abroad, help prepare us for and recover from severe weather, care for our veterans and much more. Providing our public servants adequate compensation is about more than just fairness, it is about ensuring we have a government that meets our country's needs.

With the economy now recovering and sequestration relief provided for FY17, it is time to end austerity-driven pay policies. Many middle-class federal employees accept lower pay in the spirit of public service. But you can ask for only so much continued sacrifice from individuals and families who have already given in the name of service to their country.

Thank you for considering NARFE's views. If you have any questions or comments regarding this request, please contact NARFE Legislative Director 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

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

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