

June 11, 2022

***Sent via e-mail***

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. Senate

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger, Chairman Leahy and Vice-Chairman Shelby:

On behalf of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE), I write to request you maintain parity between the increases in civilian and uniformed military personnel pay for 2023. Each should receive at least a 4.6 percent average pay increase, pursuant to recent changes in the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Employment Cost Index (ECI) for private-sector wages and salaries. Should you consider a higher pay rate increase for military personnel due to high inflation, I urge you to apply the same rationale in considering a higher pay rate increase for civilian federal workers.

If appropriations remain silent, the decision defers to President Biden, who indicated support of a 4.6 percent pay increase for both federal civilian and uniformed military personnel in his fiscal year 2023 budget request. This amount tracks with the increase in private-sector wages and salaries, as measured by the ECI, from the third quarter of 2020 to the same period in 2021.

It is common practice to use this benchmark figure, but it often results in pay increases lagging the current situation. With annual inflation most recently measured at 8.6 percent, the 4.6 percent increase will fall substantially short of the rising cost of living. In light of this, some lawmakers understandably have suggested a larger increase in pay for military personnel. If granted, the same rationale applies equally to federal workers, perhaps even more so for federal employees, who often face lower pay increases during economic downturns, yet fail to see the opposite – higher pay increases – when conditions merit it.

Federal workers dedicate their careers to serving this country and work side by side with our military, assisting our uniformed troops at home and abroad. Federal workers protect our borders, ensure safe travel, and help us prepare for and recover from disaster. They also face the same economic hardships that affect all those in our country. Congress should keep these facts in mind as it forges ahead in the appropriations

process. Maintaining pay parity and a reasonable system of compensation is essential to the federal government's ability to respond to the needs of the American people.

For these reasons, I urge you to support equivalent average pay increases for both uniformed military personnel and civilian employees of the federal government. Thank you for your consideration of our views. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact NARFE Staff Vice President for Policy and Programs John Hatton at [jhatton@narfe.org](mailto:jhatton@narfe.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Thomas', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ken Thomas  
NARFE National President