



NEWS RELEASE

1750 H St., NW • Washington, DC 20006 • (202) 572-5500 • www.nteu.org

**For Immediate Release
December 3, 2010**

**Contact: Dina Long
(202) 572-5500, ext. 7058**

NTEU and Federal-Postal Coalition Urge Congress to Reject Proposed Pay Freeze

Washington, D.C.—In letters to every member of the House and Senate, the leader of the National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU) today called for congressional opposition to the White House proposal for a two-year freeze on federal pay.

“Freezing wages over the next two years will not serve the interests of the taxpayers,” wrote NTEU President Colleen M. Kelley, “and will cost us more in reduced services and lost talent from those who choose to retire, just when the government needs them more than ever.”

In addition to these letters, the Federal-Postal Coalition, which includes unions and management groups alike, sent a letter coordinated by NTEU calling on Congress to oppose the proposed freeze when Congress considers it. Eighteen organizations signed the letter.

The group’s letter said, “The Federal-Postal Coalition members are not unaware of the difficult economic times the nation faces and the large budget deficit. However, we do not believe singling out federal employees for deficit reduction is fair.” The letter noted that a freeze “is likely to impede the government’s ability to hire and keep talented and skilled employees at a time when nearly 45 percent are eligible to retire.”

Meanwhile, in her letter to representatives and senators, President Kelley emphasized the modest 1.4 percent increase initially proposed by the administration for 2011 is based on the Employment Cost Index (ECI), which measures private sector wage increases.

“It would be a small step towards closing the-now 24 percent pay gap with the private sector,” she wrote, “and barely offset the 7.2 percent average health premium increase federal workers will pay” in 2011.

She noted that President Obama “reaffirmed his budget request” on Sept. 1 by not using his emergency authority under federal pay law to freeze or change the basic pay portion of the raise. By not acting, Kelley said, under existing law, a 0.9 percent raise is scheduled to go into effect in January.

MORE

NTEU, Coalition Letters Oppose Pay Freeze—Add One

The president also changed direction and used his authority under the law on Nov. 30 to freeze the locality portion of the pay raise, she said.

Kelley also used her letter to the elected officials to caution that a pay freeze for federal civilian employees would break “the longstanding principle of pay parity between military and federal civilian employees—which the president embraced in his budget.”

Further, President Kelley said, the proposed pay freeze “reaches to those who carry on the important work of the government,” including Customs and Border Protection Officers who protect ports of entry; employees who monitor food safety at the Food and Drug Administration; those who process claims and appeals representatives who deal with the elderly and disabled at the Social Security Administration; Environmental Protection Agency scientists who help protect our environment; Treasury and Internal Revenue Service personnel who administer tax laws; and many others.

NTEU is the largest independent federal union, representing more than 150,000 employees in 31 agencies and departments.