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COMMITTEE ON  
ARMED SERVICES

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COMMITTEE ON  
THE BUDGET

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## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4607

November 19, 2013

The Honorable Patty Murray, Chair  
Senate Budget Committee  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan, Chair  
House Budget Committee  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairmen Murray and Ryan:

Thank you for the work you are doing to arrive at a compromise budget deal. I am proud of the fact that the Senate and House each passed their own version of the budget resolution this year, and that you are leading House and Senate conferees in search of a compromise fair to both sides.

I write today regarding issues affecting federal employees. Federal employees have been operating under a pay freeze for the past three years. In addition, federal employees have been subjected to furloughs this year, as a result of indiscriminate sequestration cuts contained in the Budget Control Act of 2011. In particular, civilian federal employees in the Department of Defense were subject to six unpaid furlough days in FY 2013. The 16-day government shutdown in October sent many federal employees home, unsure of when they would be allowed to return to work. According to the White House, 850,000 federal employees were furloughed and thrown into uncertainty about their pay while critical services went undone.

In addition, federal employees have contributed to deficit reduction efforts in past years, in terms of changes to the federal retirement system. In 2012, the passage of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act requires new federal employees to pay 2.3 percent more into their pension plans.

I believe repeatedly targeting federal employees in deficit reduction efforts is having an effect on morale, employee retention and talent recruitment. I raised this very issue during an Armed Services Committee hearing with Department of Defense officials on October 10. Each DoD witness unequivocally reiterated that sequestration and furlough have had a negative toll on morale for civilian and non-civilian federal employees. They testified that vital workers are questioning their value and considering the private sector as a result of an uncertain future.

I strongly support the goal of a compromise on the budget that allows Congress to repeal or replace the across-the-board, nonsensical cuts due to sequestration. But I strongly believe we can achieve this goal without targeting federal employees who have already been impacted by multiple deficit reduction efforts in the past.

I appreciate your consideration as we continue to weigh all options during the budget conference.

Sincerely,



TIM KAINE