

April 13, 2015

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of the over 200,000 managers and supervisors in the federal government whose interests are represented by the Federal Managers Association (FMA), I am writing to express deep concerns for the fiscal year 2016 budget proposals from both the House the Senate, as they have dire impacts on the federal workforce. When you and your fellow members of Congress return to session next week to develop a budget plan derived from legislation passed in both chambers, I implore you to consider the needs of the federal workforce as they continue to serve our fellow Americas. The federal workforce deserves fully funded departments and agencies that enables them to meet congressionally-mandated missions and goals.

The House and Senate budget plans passed in the last week of March called for not only reductions in human capital, but also cuts to our hard earned benefits. The Senate budget plan (S. Con. Res. 11) proposed implementing changes to federal retirement as called for in the Simpson-Bowles Commission, which would raise federal employee retirement contributions by 6.35 percent; and, the House plan (H. Con. Res. 27) also for this increase, as well as phase-out the defined benefit plan, and an end Social Security supplements for younger retirees. While the Senate did not call note what specific cost savings measure it would implement in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, the House called to tie benefits to length of service. The increases to pension contributions is effectively a permanent six percent pay cut. It is well known that federal employees have disproportionately shouldered the burden of deficit reduction through the three year pay freeze, increases to pension contributions for new hires, sequestration furloughs, and the uncertainty of the October 2013 government shutdown. The federal workforce has done its part to combat the deficit.

Additionally, both plans call for attrition of the federal workforce, hiring only one employee for every three that leave. Recruitment and retention are already problems facing the federal workforce, as the private sector can offer far more in the way of pay and benefits. Enacting these proposals would further eliminate the notion of the federal workforce as a “model employer.” Too many of the best and the brightest do not consider civil service and this will drive current federal employees into retirement as soon as possible.

We need to sit down and have a frank discussion of what we want and expect from our federal government, and appropriately fund our missions and priorities, and the people who carry them out. It is unacceptable to expect the federal workforce to accomplish its critical missions without sufficient resources and investment in these men and women. Congress should applaud and build up those who answer the noble call to civil service. Thank you for your time and consideration of our views. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact



FMA's Government Affairs Director Greg Stanford at gstanford@fedmanagers.org or (703) 683-8700.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Patricia J. Niehaus', written in a cursive style.

Patricia J. Niehaus
National President