

Republicans Continue to Place Burden of Deficit Reduction on Middle-Class Federal Employees

This week, House Republicans are wasting time and taxpayer dollars on yet another bill that targets middle-class federal employees. Instead of working on a comprehensive plan to prevent sequestration and reduce the deficit in a balanced way, Republicans are continuing their attack on the federal workforce by freezing their pay for the third year in a row.

Federal workers are the only middle class Americans that have been asked to contribute to deficit reduction, and rather than take a fair and balanced approach to our fiscal challenges, Republicans are placing the burden of deficit reduction solely on their shoulders.

Federal employees have already contributed \$103 billion toward deficit reduction by accepting:

- A two-year pay freeze that has produced a \$60 billion contribution;
- An increased pension contribution that has resulted in a \$15 billion contribution;
- And a reduced and delayed cost-of-living-adjustment this year, which will yield a \$28 billion contribution.

Yet, Republicans continue to target these hard-working Americans. In addition to blocking this 0.5% pay raise – which is an **additional \$11 billion contribution** – House Republicans singled out federal employees throughout the 112th Congress by passing:

- **H.Con.Res. 112** (The Republican Fiscal Year 2013 Budget Resolution) – Cut \$78 billion from federal employee pensions.
- **H.R. 5652** (Sequester Replacement Reconciliation Act of 2012) and **H.R. 6684** (Spending Reduction Act of 2012) – Both made draconian cuts to federal employees' retirement.
- **H.R. 3813** (Securing Annuities for Federal Employees Act of 2012) – Imposed new costs on millions of working Americans by requiring federal employees to nearly triple their contributions to the Federal Employee Retirement System; requiring new federal employees hired since 2011 to contribute four percent of their pay into their federal retirement accounts and substantially reducing their pension annuities; and eliminating annuity payments for federal employees who retire before age 62.

- **H.R. 3835** (To extend the pay limitation for Members of Congress and Federal Employees) – Extended an existing pay freeze on federal employees, for a third straight year, through December 31, 2013.
- **H.R. 5854** (Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2013) – Included a federal employee pay freeze.
- **H.R. 828** (Federal Employee Tax Accountability Act of 2011) – Would require the federal government to fire federal employees who fall behind on their taxes.

To continue to single out our federal workforce is both unfair and unwise. Federal employees serve alongside our military personnel, defend our borders, ensure the safety of consumers, support our veterans, and perform countless other important services that our communities depend on. By continuing their attack on these hardworking Americans, Republicans are undermining our ability to recruit and retain a top-notch federal workforce:

- According to a 2012 report by the Federal Salary Council, **federal employees were paid nearly 35% less than private sector employees** in similar occupations.
- And while federal employees have had their pay frozen since 2011, the **private sector has seen a 4.7% pay increase** over the past three years, according to the Employment Cost Index.

If the federal government is going to recruit and retain a highly-educated and highly-skilled workforce to serve the American people, we cannot continue to demagogue our public servants who could earn much more in the private sector.

We need a balanced approach to deficit reduction that asks all Americans to contribute their fair share. Federal employees did not create our fiscal challenges and we should not rely on them alone to solve it. It's time for Republicans to abandon these political games, and work with Democrats on a fair and balanced plan that will put our country on a fiscally sustainable path.