

Talking Points on Republican MTR Targeting Federal Employees

- The Republican Motion to Recommit is a cynical and ideologically-based attempt to make federal employees a scapegoat for spending after Congressional Republicans added trillions to the debt when they were in the majority and now refuse to work with Democrats on real efforts to cut spending and reduce the deficit.
- **The Senate yesterday rejected a similar proposal** offered as an amendment to the Supplemental Appropriations Act (53-45), seeing it as a transparently ideological attack on federal employees that would undermine the government's efforts to compete with the private sector for high-quality workers.
- The workers Republicans are targeting are the frontline employees who are working hard every day to help our country respond to challenges both domestically and abroad. They are **scientists at NIH conducting groundbreaking research, CIA employees serving in war zones like Iraq and Afghanistan, Border Patrol agents and Customs and Border Patrol Officers engaged in an increasingly dangerous mission, doctors and nurses at VA hospitals caring for wounded and ill veterans, and correctional officers guarding terrorists and gang leaders in federal prisons.**
- **The premise of the motion - that federal salaries are significantly outpacing private-sector salaries - is completely false.** According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the disparity between private and public sector wages is a whopping 22%. The Pay Agents of the current and previous Republican Administration confirm this.
- Republicans are using faulty data based on flawed analyses that directly contradict official statistics on comparisons of federal and private sector pay and ignore key differences in the composition of the two workforces, including job responsibilities, knowledge and required skills (not just job titles), the cost of market wages in various localities, educational levels, as well as years of experience.
- Under the Federal Employees' Pay Comparability Act of 1990, pay for civilian federal employees is adjusted each year to keep the salaries of federal workers competitive with comparable occupations in the private sector. The annual increases in federal employee pay are based on changes in the cash compensation paid to workers in the private sector, as measured by the Employment Cost Index.
- The Employment Cost Index for the relevant period of measurement for 2011 is 1.4% - the amount of the federal employee adjustment proposed by President Obama for FY2011. This adjustment would just keep pace with private sector increases, but would do nothing to close the 22% gap.

- **Republicans' sorry record on fiscal responsibility – spending trillions on policies without paying for them – shows middle-class Americans what they would really do again if given the opportunity.**
 - During the 12 years that Republicans controlled Congress, they turned record surpluses into the worst deficits in American history, with 85% of today's deficits attributed to Republican policies
 - In the 111th Congress, Republicans have voted against nearly every meaningful measure to cut wasteful spending

- **Meanwhile, Democrats have taken real action to put our nation back on a fiscally responsible path, with practically no Republican support:**
 - Enacted statutory Pay-As-You-Go
 - Supported creation of a bipartisan fiscal commission
 - Enacted deficit-reducing health care and education reforms
 - Passed the IMPROVE Acquisition Act
 - Passed the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act

- **Instead of these purely political maneuvers, Republicans should work with Democrats to build on these actions to make serious efforts to cut unnecessary spending and help reduce the deficit.**

The following chart is in the last pay report of the Bush administration, signed by Elaine Chao, Labor Sec., Jim Nussle, OMB Director, and the acting OPM director, Michael Hager. The average gap was 23.25% in 2008.

The President's Pay Agent

Remaining Pay Disparities in 2008

Locality Pay Area	Remaining Disparity
Atlanta	26.35%
Boston	27.74%
Buffalo	22.39%
Chicago	22.52%
Cincinnati	12.90%
Cleveland	20.23%
Columbus	20.65%
Dallas	25.53%
Dayton	15.05%
Denver	18.80%
Detroit	19.74%
Hartford	25.05%
Houston	16.52%
Huntsville	21.99%
Indianapolis	18.47%
Los Angeles	22.64%
Miami	21.74%
Milwaukee	18.33%
Minneapolis	21.87%
New York	25.75%
Philadelphia	20.40%
Phoenix	25.27%
Pittsburgh	20.13%
Portland	23.23%
Raleigh	12.79%
Richmond	15.97%
Sacramento	24.18%
San Diego	26.05%
San Francisco	25.98%
Seattle	26.45%
Washington, DC	36.85%
Rest of U.S.	14.28%
Average	23.25%