



March 24, 2015

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the nearly five million Americans – federal and postal workers and annuitants – represented by the national member organizations of the Federal-Postal Coalition, we urge you to oppose H. Con. Res. 27, the proposed Fiscal Year 2016 Concurrent Resolution on the Budget. This extreme budget blueprint takes \$318 billion from the federal and postal community, forcing this group of the middle-class dedicated public servants to once again shoulder a disproportionate share of the sacrifice.

Among the many proposed reductions in civil service pay and benefits, the Coalition specifically opposes the elimination of both the defined benefit retirement program (FERS), a long-standing component of federal civil service compensation, and the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) by converting it into a voucher plan. The Coalition also opposes the increases in the contributions of existing federal employees towards their retirement, while simultaneously targeting the Thrift Savings Plan by reducing the return rate of the G-Fund.

The budget calls for federal and postal employees to “make greater contributions toward their retirement.” As such, the House Budget Resolution would, if implemented, require all federal workers to pay an additional 6 percent of salary toward retirement with no increase in benefits. This is the same as a permanent 6 percent pay cut, or working without pay for three weeks every year.

This is nothing more than a poorly-disguised pay cut for workers who have already suffered through a recent three-year pay freeze, furloughs as a result of sequestration, and untold financial hardship and anxiety from the 16-day government shutdown.

The recent pay freeze federal employees endured, as well as the idea of federal and postal employees contributing more to their retirement benefits, was predicated on the concept of shared sacrifice and recommendations from the Simpson-Bowles Fiscal Commission. Yet, Congress has taken up few of the Simpson-Bowles recommendations aside from those directly affecting the men and women serving our nation in the federal and postal workforce. This budget is no different. It asks for disproportionate sacrifices from federal and postal employees and retirees, and goes far beyond the proposals in the Fiscal Commission report.

With regard to the U.S. Postal Service, the budget outlines “illustrative” reforms to save \$40 billion over 10 years, including service cuts affecting both the frequency and type of mail delivery. These service cuts are unnecessary and counter-productive. They would harm tens of millions of businesses and households that rely on Saturday and door delivery and simply drive business away. The budget also proposes, without any justification, stripping postal employees of their rights to negotiate over contributions by postal employees for health and life insurance. There are other reforms that can strengthen the Postal Service without hurting postal customers or postal employees.

In addition, Coalition members are concerned about the reconciliation instructions to the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. The Committee has little jurisdiction over mandatory spending beyond programs and activities which involve federal employee pay, health care, and retirement.



It is simply unacceptable to go after these programs. No other group of Americans has contributed to deficit reduction or other congressional priorities in a manner similar to that endured by federal employees. There has been no shared sacrifice. It is time for Congress to find other ways to craft the budget beyond, once again, taking from the middle-class federal employees who have dedicated their lives to serving the American people and, in the process, driving our best talent away from public service.

Federal employees have already contributed \$159 billion toward deficit reduction since fiscal year 2011 alone, including \$1 billion in lost wages in 2013 alone from sequestration-related furloughs. Enough is enough. For these reasons, the undersigned organizations call on you to oppose H. Con. Res. 27.

Sincerely,

American Federation of Government Employees
American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees
American Foreign Service Association
American Postal Workers Union
FAA Managers Association
Federal Managers Association
Federally Employed Women
International Association of Fire Fighters
International Federation of Professional & Technical Engineers
Laborers' International Union of North America
National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association
National Air Traffic Controllers Association
National Association of Assistant United States Attorneys
National Association of Government Employees
National Association of Letter Carriers
National Association of Postal Supervisors
National Association of Postmasters of the U.S.
National Council of Social Security Management Associations
National Federation of Federal Employees
National League of Postmasters
National Postal Mail Handlers Union
National Rural Letter Carriers' Association
National Treasury Employees Union
National Weather Service Employees Organization
Organization of Professional Employees of the USDA
Patent Office Professional Association
Professional Aviation Safety Specialists
Professional Managers Association
Senior Executives Association

Coalition Chair: Alan Lopatin