



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL ENGINEERS AFL-CIO & CLC

501 3rd Street, NW, Suite 701, Washington, DC 20001
202-239-4880 • FAX 202-239-4881 • www.ifpte.org

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August 10, 2023

Dear Representative:

We write to you as the executive officers of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), a labor union representing upwards of 90,000 employees, including federal employees working at Navy shipyards and depots, Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), NASA, Social Security Administration (SSA), the U.S. Immigration Court, Environmental Protection Agency, National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Energy, Merit Systems Protection Board, and elsewhere. We urge you to cosponsor and support the passage of the Pay Compression Relief Act, H.R. 5171, sponsored and introduced this week by Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.).

This bill will allow federal employees to receive the base pay and locality pay increases that they are entitled to without losing pay under the federal pay cap for their pay system. Currently, federal employees in higher grades and steps of the general schedule, administrative law judge (ALJ) pay scale, and other pay systems experience pay compression when their overall pay is capped by pay limitations tied to the Executive Schedule.

IFPTE members know full well the frustration and demoralization of seeing Congress and the Executive Branch approving pay increases but unable to receive those increases due to the pay cap. Administrative law judges at SSA, immigration judges, engineers and scientists at NASA, and STEM and white collar professionals with coveted skills and knowledge at DOD and other agencies who work in high cost-of-living areas throughout the U.S. hit the pay cap in their respective pay systems well before reaching the top steps of their pay system. Some of our members working at SSA hit the pay cap in the middle of AL-3, which is the lowest of the three pay grades for ALJs. At the Immigration Court, immigration judges in several localities hit the pay cap in IJ-2, the second lowest out of four pay grades. IFPTE members working in Northern California at NASA, the USACE, and EPA hit the pay cap before they even get to GS-15, the final grade in the General Schedule pay system.

The existing pay caps in federal pay systems have created a disincentive for senior, mid-career, and high-skilled federal workers with specialized knowledge to continue their careers in the civil service while also creating an artificial constraint for agencies' recruitment and retention efforts to retain and recruit high-skilled federal workers as federal pay falls further behind private sector pay.

For these reasons, we urge you to cosponsor the Pay Compression Relief Act. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact IFPTE Legislative Director Faraz Khan at 202-239-4892 or fkhan@ifpte.org.

Sincerely,

Matthew S. Biggs
IFPTE President

Gay Henson
IFPTE Secretary-Treasurer