February 11, 2019

United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), including thousands of federal employees, I write to endorse the “Federal Adjustment of Income Rates Act of 2019,” (FAIR Act), S. 426, which increases federal employees’ 2020 salaries by 3.6 percent. AFSCME requests you co-sponsor S. 426.

This helpful legislation would raise federal employees’ 2020 salaries by 3.6 percent overall, including a 2.6 percent increase for basic pay, and a 1 percent increase for locality pay. A salary increase is needed because when contrasted position by position, federal employees’ wages lag below employees in the non-federal sector – both in the private sector and in state and local governments. In many occupations, federal employees are significantly underpaid. Moreover, since 2010, congressional legislation reduced federal employees’ pay and benefits more than $180 billion (over 10 years). Congress should reverse these cuts and increase 2019 salaries to close the pay gap.

Unfortunately, the federal government’s 2017 hiring freeze and recent shutdowns have reduced morale and forced federal employees to cover others’ job responsibilities. Given the importance of recruiting, hiring, and retaining a qualified capable federal government workforce, it is also important that we pay competitive salaries to continue attracting the best and brightest to our public service.

AFSCME strongly supports this pay raise and we urge you to co-sponsor S. 426.

Sincerely,

Scott Frey
Director of Federal Government Affairs

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