



American Foreign Service Association

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January 9, 2014

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Chairwoman
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
503 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Mikulski:

On behalf of the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA) and the 31,000 active-duty and retiree members of the Foreign Service that we represent, I wish to convey our deepest appreciation for the dedication and commitment you have demonstrated toward Foreign Service employees and their families.

We recognize the limitations of a restrained budget environment, but are confident that as the appropriations process moves forward this week your leadership will help us protect our members' ability to do their jobs and to be appropriately compensated for their work. Our members are appreciative of the request made by the White House and the Department of State in the FY2014 International Affairs Budget to provide for an overseas comparability pay (OCP) adjustment, but are concerned about the constant talk in Congress of potential cuts to diplomacy and development. In our view, there is no justification for Foreign Service members to be treated any different than civilian employees or our colleagues in the intelligence community who generally benefit from locality pay. This kind of double standard is unfair and highly demoralizing.

Investing in diplomacy, development, and the Foreign Service personnel who supports its execution is essential to keep our fellow Americans safe and to spearhead economic growth and job creation. Every penny allocated to civilian programs further contributes to our national interests while helping reduce the expenses associated with military operations and the potential loss of life.

As the voice of the Foreign Service, AFSA would like to urge your support to ensure that the requested funding would succeed in providing the third and final tranche of OCP adjustment and to make sure that current levels are codified and not subject to political maneuvering.

Thank you, once again, for your leadership and dedication to the Foreign Service.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bob Silverman".

Robert J. Silverman
AFSA President +

Marylander

*Dear Senator Mikulski,
A very heartfelt Thanks for
your support of the Foreign Service,
it improves our national security*