



American Foreign Service Association

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March 25, 2014

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chairwoman
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,
and Related Programs
HT-2 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,
and Related Programs
2365 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member Lowey:

On behalf of the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA) and the 31,000 active-duty and retired members of the Foreign Service we represent, I would like to thank you for your leadership in foreign policy and your unyielding commitment to protecting the interests of Foreign Service employees and their families.

Today, I am asking for your help to correct a historical mistake in the treatment of Foreign Service employees serving overseas. Overseas Comparability Pay (OCP) is critical to the development and retention of a competitive workforce. OCP restores the basic pay equity between Washington, D.C., and overseas assignments for entry and mid-level Foreign Service employees that existed prior to the government wide implementation of locality pay. Right now, there is a structural disincentive to serve overseas for the working rank and file because they receive only two-thirds of Washington, D.C., locality base pay, while colleagues from other agencies serving overseas receive the full amount. The Supplemental Appropriation Act, 2009 (P.L. 111-32) authorized the Secretary of State to begin implementing OCP adjustments under Section 1113. This section also gave the Secretary administrative flexibility in determining the phase-in schedule, although subsequent provisions of law have limited implementation to just the first two phases. Post differentials and allowances are not equivalent to OCP, which is part of base pay and is not related to specific post of assignment, working conditions or cost of living.

Our members joined the Foreign Service fully aware of the risks and challenges of our profession, but nowhere does it say that they must remain silent in the face of unfair treatment. Please correct this wrong.

We urge you to act promptly and appropriate the third tranche of Overseas Comparability Pay for the Foreign Service. It is the right thing to do.

Once again, thank you for your leadership and support of the Foreign Service. Should you have any questions, please have someone from your staff contact me at (202) 338-4045, ext. 502 or at silverman@afsa.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert J. Silverman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Robert" and last name "Silverman" clearly legible.

Robert J. Silverman
President