

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 28, 2015

The Honorable Tom Price  
Chairman  
House Budget Committee  
100 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen  
Ranking Member  
House Budget Committee  
100 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Price and Ranking Member Van Hollen:

We write to you today to express our grave concerns with the proposals in the FY 2016 Budget Resolutions that ask federal employees to make even further significant financial sacrifices. While we are encouraged by the budget conference committee's efforts to reach an agreement on discretionary spending levels, we are disappointed to hear that several provisions impacting federal employees are being considered as a pay-for, including increases in contributions to the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS); changes to premiums under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP); and possibly the most troubling, major reductions to the rate of return on the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Government Securities Fund (G-Fund).

As you know, federal employees have already endured a three-year pay freeze; furloughs due to sequestration; and were required to not work because of indecision and political gamesmanship that resulted in a government shutdown on October 1, 2013 lasting 16 days. In addition, employees hired since 2012 have seen required contribution increases to their retirement, bringing our federal workers' total sacrifice to \$159 billion since 2010.

Congress charges federal employees – VA doctors and nurses, DOD civilians, CIA, FBI, and DEA agents, and NIH researchers – with important duties and expects these duties to be performed with the highest caliber of expertise. Rather than being recognized for their service, these public servants see their salary and benefits continually used as a pawn in the game of politics. We continue to ask our federal civilian workforce to do more with less. When is it enough?

According to the Office of Personnel Management's Federal Employment Statistics from September 2014, we collectively represent approximately 145,457 federal employees and retirees

between both of our districts out of the 325, 219 living and working in the Commonwealth of Virginia. We are proud to represent the thousands of dedicated men and women – many of whom are repeatedly put in harm’s way – who exemplify patriotism every day at their jobs.

That is why we respectfully urge the conference committee, as it moves through the budget reconciliation process, to reconsider targeting federal employees as an offset to deficit reductions. Further, we ask that you instead strongly consider deficit reduction efforts that focus more realistically on addressing the true drivers of our debt. We look forward to a budget agreement that does not disproportionately single out the federal workforce. The sacrifice must be shared.

Sincerely,



Robert J. Wittman  
Member of Congress



Barbara Comstock  
Member of Congress