



NEWS RELEASE

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NTEU Leader Supports 3.5% Military Pay Raise; Seeks Same Raise for Federal Civilian Workers

Washington—The leader of the nation’s largest independent union of federal employees today joined with a coalition of organizations representing members of the military and their families in calling for a 3.5 percent pay raise in fiscal 2008 for military personnel.

That raise would be half-a-percentage point higher than the three percent raise proposed by the administration for next year for both those in the military and members of the civilian federal workforce.

In letters to every member of the military personnel subcommittees of both the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, President Colleen M. Kelley of the National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU) said the higher raise would help close the pay gap between these two groups of public servants and the private sector.

The NTEU leader noted that the Defense Authorization Act for fiscal years 2000 and 2004 both required that pay increases for military personnel equal the annual increase in the Employment Cost Index (ECI), plus one-half of one percent.

“That standard has been used in every year of the current administration until 2007,” she said, “when military personnel received only a 2.2 percent raise.” Citing the military coalition’s March 1 testimony before the House Military Personnel Subcommittee, she said the 2.2 percent figure was the smallest pay increase for the military in 13 years and occurred at a time “when troops are putting their lives on the line every day for the rest of America.”

(MORE)

Kelley Supports 3.5% '08 Raise for Military—Add One

Like the military, President Kelley said, “federal civilian workers serve their country faithfully and are facing a widening pay gap.”

Despite the existence of the 1990 Federal Employee Pay Comparability Act—which was intended to close, in stages over 10 years, the public-private pay gap—such a gap remains; at present, she said, federal employee pay is, on average, 13 percent less than that of their private sector counterparts.

In her letter to the House and Senate members, the NTEU leader reminded them that in nearly every year over the past two decades, there have been “equal adjustments in military and civilian pay” to help close the pay gap for these two groups of federal workers.

“I want to urge the subcommittee(s) to provide the military with the additional one-half percent—and I will be pushing for the identical raise for the federal civilian workforce,” she wrote.

As the largest independent federal union, NTEU represents some 150,000 employees in 30 agencies and departments.

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March 21, 2007

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chapter Presidents and Legislative Coordinators

RE: Letter Supporting Higher Military Pay

SUMMARY: Yesterday I wrote to every member of the House and Senate Armed Services Subcommittees on Military Personnel in support of a higher pay raise than the administration proposed.

Yesterday I sent a letter, identical to the one attached, to every Senator and Representative who serves on the Personnel Subcommittees of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees. I lent support to the Military Coalition's testimony in favor of a higher pay raise and urged the subcommittees to provide a 3.5 percent pay raise, equal to the one I proposed for federal employees.

I urged the subcommittees to provide that level for which there is precedent in the Department of Defense Authorization Acts. Prior to 2007 both the military and federal workers received a pay raise that equaled the Employment Cost Index plus ½ percent. For 2008, this amounts to a 3.5 percent raise for both groups, the level I called for in my letter and prior testimony.

When I testified before the Subcommittee on Financial Services of the House Appropriations Committee on March 6th, I pointed out that federal employees are paid 13 percent less than their private sector counterparts. Funding the 2008 pay raise at the administration's proposed 3 percent will do nothing to close this gap which is the stated goal of the 1990 Federal Employees Pay Comparability Act, nor will it close the military pay gap. Both groups should receive a 3.5 percent raise.

If you have any questions on this subject, please call Gail Amidzich in the Legislation Department at 202-572-5500, ext. 7048.

Colleen M. Kelley
National President

Attachment

NTEU

The National Treasury Employees Union

March 20, 2007

Chairman Ben Nelson
Personnel Subcommittee Senate Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
SR-228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Nelson:

On behalf of the National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU) and our more than 150,000 federal workers in 30 government agencies, I am writing to lend support to the Military Coalition's request for a 3.5 percent pay raise for fiscal year 2008 for military personnel. As you know, the Military Coalition, including the National Military Family Association, testified in support of the 3.5 percent pay raise during the Military Personnel Subcommittee's March 1st and March 15th hearings. The Coalition cited the pay gap between military personnel and the private sector and urged the Subcommittee to include an extra half percent above the administration's request of 3 percent.

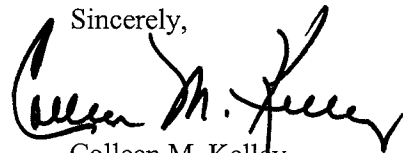
We, at NTEU, support the military request and will be working to enact the same level for federal civil servants. As you know, the Department of Defense Authorization Acts for fiscal years 2000 and 2004 (PL 106-65; PL 108-136) required that pay increases for military personnel equate to the annual increase in the Employment Cost Index (ECI) plus ½ percent. That standard had been used in every year of the current administration until 2007 when military personnel received only a 2.2 percent raise. As the Coalition pointed out in its March 1st statement, the 2.2 percent raise is the smallest raise in 13 years at a time when troops are putting their lives on the line every day for the rest of America.

Like the military, federal civilian workers serve their country faithfully and are facing a widening pay gap. In nearly every year in the past two decades there have been equal adjustments in military and civilian pay to help close the pay gap between these two groups and the private sector. The Federal Employees Pay Comparability Act was enacted in 1990 to close the gap between federal and private sector pay, and has never been fully implemented. Today, federal employees on average are paid 13 percent less than their private sector counterparts. Like the military we are also requesting a 3.5 percent pay raise, which amounts to one-half percent above the ECI.

In his budget request, the President provided for pay parity which has governed equal military and federal pay raises in nearly every year in the past two decades. I want to urge the Subcommittee to provide the military with the additional ½ percent and I will be pushing for the identical raise for the federal civilian employee workforce.

Thanks very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Colleen M. Kelley
National President