

# NFFE News



## 2021 Omnibus Bill Passes, NFFE's Work Continues

December 22, 2020

Congress sent an omnibus spending bill to fund the government through fiscal year 2021 that included several provisions that will benefit the federal workforce. The highlights:

- No pay raise legislation was included which allows for an automatic 1% pay increase as provided by law when the Congress remains silent on pay increases for any given year. The victory for NFFE is that we were able to pull pay freeze language in the Senate version of the omnibus bill, which in turn allowed the 1% increase. NFFE lobbied extensively for pay parity with the military which is set for 3% in 2021.
- Federal employees who were affected by the so-called payroll tax deferral will be able to repay those taxes over a 12-month period next year as opposed to a four-month period as suggested by the Trump administration. NFFE will continue to seek additional relief for federal employees next year as employees see a large increase in taxes withheld in paychecks after the first of the year.
- FSA and Dependent Care account deadlines will extend into 2021 to give employees more time to spend funds set aside in 2020 but not used because of restrictions on medical treatment availability and dependent care restrictions due to the pandemic.



NFFE lobbied hard for a legislative repeal of a Trump executive order that creates Schedule F employees, a new category of federal employment that is largely exempt from hiring, due process, performance, and termination civil service rules and laws. Senate Republicans balked at simply stopping implementation of Schedule F via a few lines of text in the omnibus bill, instead opting that President-elect Biden fix it next year by rescinding the executive order.

The major flaw with that thinking revolves around two points. First, Schedule F will be used to reclassify political appointees allowing them to stay past the end of a presidential administration—a first for this country. And second, career employees at OPM and OMB are slated to transfer onto Schedule F before the end of the administration, exposing them to immediate terminations without cause as provided under the new authority. NFFE endorsed a [new bill](#) by Government Oversight Chairman Gerry Connolly (D-VA) to stop the damage that will be created by Schedule F between now and inauguration next year.

**[www.NFFE.org](http://www.NFFE.org)**