



# NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Affiliated with the International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers, AFL-CIO

September 26, 2023

Dear Representative,

On behalf of over 110,000 federal employees represented by the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE), employed at over 35 various departments and agencies within the U.S. government, I write to you to request that Congress pass a short-term Continuing Resolution (CR) that maintains Fiscal Year 2023 spending levels. It is imperative that you uphold your commitment to your constituents and the country by funding the government with a short-term CR before the start of the new fiscal year on October 1.

I also request that after a short-term CR is passed, Congress provides proper funding for federal agencies in the next fiscal year according to the spending levels that were agreed upon by House Speaker McCarthy and President Biden. These measures were previously approved by Congress in bipartisan fashion through the passing of the Fiscal Responsibility Act. Anything less than these already negotiated and agreed to funding levels will leave federal agencies with limited resources to carry out their vital missions in service to the American people.

In recent years, our union and our membership have experienced significant government shutdowns. We understand the consequences of a lapse in government funding and a subsequent government shutdown will affect not only federal employees, but Americans in every Congressional district across the nation, as well as the broader U.S. economy. Federal agencies will be unable to hire or train new employees, leading to setbacks at a time when many departments are already struggling with recruitment and retention. Critical services that the American people rely on every day will suffer, and the blame will rest with those who were elected to Congress to ensure the government is funded and operational in order to serve the citizens of this country.

Essential government services will continue to be provided, however, the dedicated employees carrying out those missions will go without pay until the government is funded. Contrary to popular belief, most federal workers live paycheck to paycheck. Even if a shutdown lasts only one or two pay periods, this means federal employees risk defaulting on loans, rent, mortgages, credit cards, utilities, and other bills. Critical items like childcare and medical expenses will be unaffordable during this time, leading to severe obstacles for federal employees at no fault of their own.

It is rather shameful that we find ourselves in this situation once again. This government shutdown, like all occasions before it, is wasteful, irresponsible, and entirely avoidable. Every day that Congress allows this shutdown to go on, hundreds of millions of dollars in taxpayer money will be wasted. Our elected representatives were sent to Washington to govern in the best interest of their constituents. Under no circumstances is a government shutdown beneficial to the American people. Congress must do its job and govern in a responsible manner. The first order of business right now is funding the U.S. government before we reach a costly government shutdown.

Lastly, if we enter this shutdown before approving funding for federal wildland firefighter salaries, it will be too late to stop a pay cliff from occurring in which firefighters will see their pay cut by 50% up to \$20,000. It is estimated that 30 percent to 50 percent of the workforce will quit federal service in the coming weeks. As a result, this country will be unable to respond to megafires and other emergencies because Congress failed to come to an agreement to appropriately pay the folks who risk their lives to defend us from wildfires. That means communities are going to burn and people are going to die. Those are the sobering stakes of inaction on this crucial matter. We need a permanent solution on wildland firefighter pay immediately.

I urge you to seriously consider the severe consequences of a government shutdown. Federal employees and the American people do not deserve the uncertainty and hardship caused by an unnecessary and wasteful government shutdown. Please do your jobs and act in the best interest of your constituents and the American people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Erwin', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Randy Erwin  
National President  
National Federation of Federal Employees