



Local 98
"Here to Serve"

IFPTE Local 98

International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers

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SUBJECT: Federal Pay is Falling Behind—Army Corps in NYC Staff Need Your Support

Dear Representative Jeffries,

Many thanks to you and your staff for the productive meeting last week. This was the second consecutive year we have been fortunate enough to meet with your office as part of IFPTE's annual Legislative Advocacy Week. We very much appreciate your warm reception and availability during a very busy time.

We are following up today to ask for your support to address the urgent issue of low pay for federal employees. As summarized by the attached Issue Brief, federal workers make some 27% less than our private sector counterparts and there are a variety of opportunities that Congress can take to address this pay gap, including by:

- Eliminating the pay cap which maxes out GS pay to Level IV of the Executive Schedule
- Supporting Rep. Connolly and Sen. Schatz' FAIR Act of 2024
- Restoring equity in the FERS pension system by rolling back the 2013 and 2014 tiers

These and other Congressional reforms to address low pay for the federal workforce will be critical to our ability to achieve our missions across all federal agencies. We ask that you continue to seek all opportunities to advance such solutions to the broken pay system we have as federal employees. And please do not hesitate to reach out to IFPTE Local 98 for more information about how these pay problems play out on the front lines.

Despite heroic efforts from all of us at the NY District and North Atlantic Division offices of the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), it is no exaggeration to say that the high turnover rate presents one of the biggest threats to the success of our projects.

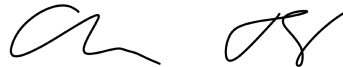
With this in mind and recognizing the difficult terrain for passing legislation in this Congress, we also have a more targeted request for your consideration. Our union has been assured over many years that the Agency is seeking all possible solutions to the problem of pay. In particular, we've been told that USACE has filed for Special Salary Rates for some of our members in the NY region. But we are unsure of what job series these special rates will cover and they have yet to materialize.

Though we recognize that such Special Salary Rates are an incomplete solution to the problems described above, we do see this as a partial balm to address the larger problem of pay for our members. **As such, we request your support to engage with the Office of Personnel Management to inquire as to the status, timeline for implementation and the scope of covered job series which we can expect the Special Salary Rates to cover for USACE staff in the greater NY/NJ geographic region.**

And if you are available to make such an inquiry, we ask that you consider sharing as part of your message a friendly reminder to OPM of the critical role that USACE plays in regulating our nation's wetlands, supporting our service members and protecting our communities from flood risk. Addressing these pay disparities will allow the Army Corps to stay on top of our many missions. Please let us know if there's any more information you might need to make such an inquiry and we'll be eager to provide any language or specific details you may require.

If we don't address the problem of federal pay, the alternative will be a slow and tragic degradation of the federal service, itself.

Sincerely yours,



Christopher Dols
President, IFPTE Local 98
Resident, NY District 8