



January 9, 2024

Dear Representative,

The Federal-Postal Coalition is an alliance of over thirty organizations that represent more than five million active and retired federal and postal employees and management associations across the country. We urge you to cosponsor the bipartisan Federal Retirement Fairness Act, H.R. 5995.

Those in the federal and postal workforces who began their careers after January 1989 as temporary employees were unable to make contributions to their Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) benefits until they became full-time, career employees. Many of these dedicated men and women find as they approach retirement, that because their time as a non-career employee did not apply toward their retirement, they are forced to choose between either working longer in their federal and postal careers than they anticipated or retiring early without their full, expected benefits.

Prior to 1989, these employees were permitted to make additional contributions as participants within the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) to retire on time, with full benefits. Regrettably, this authority lapsed in 1989 and has not been reinstated. The Federal Retirement Fairness Act (H.R. 5995), introduced by Representatives Derek Kilmer (D-WA-06) and Don Bacon (R-NE-02), works to overcome these deficits by allowing FERS employees, who began as temporary workers, to make additional monetary contributions to their retirement benefits. This legislation creates equity between employees under CSRS and FERS.

We further ask Representatives to examine how the bill could be further improved to include all those employed by the federal government. The bill could be strengthened by explicitly covering federal judicial law clerks. Many federal attorneys begin their federal service as law clerks, working directly with a federal judge for a term period assisting with research, opinion drafting, and reviewing motions. clerkship experience is not creditable under FERS, and this legislation continues to overlook this employment. We encourage lawmakers to support an amendment explicitly permitting employees to make catch-up retirement contributions for time spent in federal law clerk positions outlined in in 28 USC §§ 675, 712, 752, 794, 871.

The federal and postal employees we represent would benefit from stronger retirement security. Regardless of an employee's initial hiring status, all postal and federal employees should have full access to all the benefits they have earned. On behalf of our members, the undersigned organizations ask you to cosponsor H.R. 5995. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE)  
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)  
American Foreign Service Association (AFSA)  
American Postal Workers Union (APWU)  
FAA Managers Association (FAAMA)  
Federal Managers Association (FMA)  
International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF)

International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE)  
Laborers International Union of North America (LIUNA)  
National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE)  
National Association of Agriculture Employees (NAAE)  
National Association of Assistant United States Attorneys (NAAUSA)  
National Association of Government Employees (NAGE)  
National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC)  
National Association of Postal Supervisors (NAPS)  
National Council of Social Security Management Associations (NCSSMA)  
National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE)  
National Postal Mail Handlers Union (NPMHU)  
National Rural Letter Carriers' Association (NRLCA)  
National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU)  
Patent Office Professional Association (POPA)  
Postal Police Officers Association (PPOA)  
Professional Aviation Safety Specialists (PASS)  
Professional Managers Association (PMA)  
Senior Executives Association (SEA)  
United Postmasters and Managers of America (UPMA)