

From: Senator Ron Johnson [no-reply@ronjohnson.senate.gov]
Sent: Monday, January 30, 2012 4:14 PM
To: chilihead@frontiernet.net
Subject: Responding to your message

Dear John,

Thank you for taking the time to write me about federal employee pay and benefits.

I respect all those who work hard to build a good life for themselves and their families. That certainly includes federal, state, and local government employees who provide necessary services to the public. However, we now find ourselves in a fiscal crisis, with Wisconsinites and Americans forced to make extremely tough economic decisions. The federal government should not be immune from making those same tough decisions.

A recent study by USA Today highlighted the issue. It showed that, on average, the total cost of pay and benefits for a federal employee is double that of the average private sector worker (\$123,049 vs. \$61,051). Another study showed that for comparable occupations, the total cost of federal employees was \$38,500 higher than in the private sector.

I certainly don't want to underpay public sector workers, but we simply cannot afford to overpay them, either. I believe we should benchmark pay and benefits in the public sector to that in the private sector. After all, it is the private sector that produces long term, self-sustaining jobs and funds government at all levels.

That is why I recently co-sponsored the Public-Private Employee Retirement Parity Act, which would establish parity between private sector and federal employee pay and benefits. That is the fair thing to do.

Thank you again for taking the time to share your thoughts. It is important for me to hear the views and concerns of the people I serve. Since taking office, I have received over 300,000 pieces of correspondence and have had over 150,000 people participate in live forums and telephone town hall meetings. Please feel free to contact me in the future if I can further assist you or your family. It is an honor representing you and the good people of Wisconsin in the U.S. Senate.

Sincerely,

Ron Johnson
United States Senator