



Federal pay freeze roundup: "It's Okay, Freeze My Pay"

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We're back! The overwhelming interest in the breaking pay freeze news was a little more than our servers could handle, but all is well now. There's been an awful lot of reaction to Obama's announcement in the last few hours, so here goes:

- AFGE President John Gage reiterated his anger and disappointment in Obama's decision during a conference call with reporters this afternoon. But while NTEU earlier today pledged to try to fight the freeze in Congress, Gage was less optimistic. "The chances are slim" that the freeze could be overturned, Gage said.
- But the pay freeze isn't absolute. Office of Management and Budget Deputy Director Jeffrey Zients earlier today said promotions to higher GS grades would still continue, and OMB confirmed to me that regularly scheduled step increases will also continue. Gage said that takes a bit of the sting out of the pay freeze announcement.
- NARFE, NFFE and the [Partnership for Public Service](#) each issued their own statements emphasizing the importance of federal employees, and expressing concern that a freeze could cost the government important talent. "Across the board freezes or cuts are rarely the best management choices, because they avoid the real evaluation that ought to be done," Partnership President Max Stier said. "We urge the Administration and Congress to review the current compensation system and devise one that is more market-sensitive, so Americans can be assured its workforce is appropriately compensated."
- Office of Personnel Management Director [John Berry](#) issued a one-sentence statement shortly before 2 p.m.: "Federal employees work hard for our nation each day, and this sacrifice the President asked them to make today is significant and emblematic of the shared sacrifice we all will have to make if we are to bring the deficit to heel and preserve an economic future for our children."
- Rep. Darrell Issa, R-Calif., said the freeze is "long overdue," and called on the administration to go further to cut waste and improper payments.
- Chris Edwards at the Cato Institute is feeling pretty happy today. His blog post is titled "[Obama Adopts Cato Pay Proposal](#)" and notes that he's been pushing this issue for four years. He told Federal Times this is a good first step in tackling the deficit issue, and hopes this will build trust between Obama and the House's new Republican leadership so they can make tougher choices down the road.
- Rush Limbaugh was not nearly so gracious: "[Big whoop.](#)"
- GovLoop has created a Facebook page called "[It's Okay, Freeze My Pay.](#)" "Rather than complain, we'd like to make a pledge," the page says. "I don't work for government for the money. I do it to make a difference. Will freezing my pay hurt my family a bit? It sure will...but that's a sacrifice I'm willing to make for my country. It's a sacrifice I've always made. That's why I'm a public servant." But seeing as it had only 26 "likes" as of 4 p.m., it doesn't seem like that slogan is catching on just yet. (H/t [GovExec](#))

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