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Federal Pay Gap Disputed

Written by [Ashley Timmons Civilian](#), [Latest News](#) Nov 3, 2010



Photo: Pershing

The [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) recently released numbers showing federal pay in 2010 lagged behind private sector pay by 24 percent.

The gap has widened by two points since 2009, [according to *The Federal Times*](#).

The statistics were presented at a meeting of the Federal Salary Council, which will make recommendations to President Barack Obama about possible pay raises for federal workers for 2012, [according to a report on *Nextgov*](#).

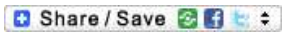
Federal worker union representatives argued the statistics show federal workers are not overpaid, contrary to small-government advocates and [even a majority of Americans](#), according to a *Washington Post* poll.

However, free-market think tank [Cato Institute](#) disputed the statistics and called for an independent, outside audit to determine federal pay. In a weak economy, it's unlikely private-sector wages would continue to be higher than federal workers, said Chris Edwards, Cato's director of tax policy.

Edwards also said Republicans, who recently regained a majority in the House of Representatives, could hold hearings on federal compensation, *Federal Times* reports.

As for why the gap widened this year, *Nextgov* reports that some officials believe personnel shifts from the Defense Department's [base realignment and closure plan](#) might have played a role.

Last month, the Office of Personnel Management released a report showing pay raises for senior civil servants had stalled, [hitting their lowest levels in five years](#).



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