



Dec. 18, 2015

Congress Passes Omnibus Appropriations and Tax Measure *Many Provisions Directly Affect Federal Employees*

The House and Senate today passed a fiscal package that will fund federal agencies for the remainder of fiscal year (FY) 2016 and make a series of tax changes.

The House overwhelmingly passed a tax-extenders bill on Thursday and approved an omnibus spending bill this morning. The Senate combined both those bills into one and approved it, sending the measure to the White House. The president has said he will sign it.

Passage of this spending-and-tax bill ends the anxiety and nervousness caused by the threat of another government shutdown. Congress provided a full year of funding for all agencies, taking shutdowns off the table until Oct. 1, 2016.

Your pay, benefits and due process rights could have been directly targeted in the omnibus but were not.

Lawmakers did not block an across-the-board federal pay raise for calendar year 2016, allowing the administration's recommended average increase of 1.3 percent to take effect in January. Congress was also silent on locality pay areas for next year, which means the administration's plan to add 13 new locality pay areas to the 33 existing regions—a decision NTEU strongly supported—will proceed in 2016.

"While NTEU will continue advocating for higher pay raises in the future, we are pleased that this raise, with the first locality adjustment in six years, was not blocked by Congress," said NTEU President Tony Reardon.

NTEU appreciates Congress finally acting to provide permanent parity between the transit and parking benefits. Previously, the maximum transit benefit was \$130 a month whereas the parking benefit was \$250 a month. In 2016, both the transit and parking benefits will rise to \$255 a month. NTEU worked hard to achieve permanent parity between the two benefits.

The measure also includes an NTEU-supported requirement for OPM to provide credit monitoring and ID theft protection to individuals affected by the recent data breaches for 10 years. This is a significant expansion of the one or three years of services being offered depending on which breach (personnel records versus background investigations) individuals were affected by. The measure also raises the amount for protection from \$1 million to \$5 million.

Federal employees—and the nation—are no longer under the immediate threat of yet another government shutdown. While the shutdown threat has been eliminated, NTEU believes it is unacceptable to subject you to undue stress from continual budgeting crises, which also harms the American public.

NTEU thanks you for your ongoing service and commitment. To learn more about how the spending bill affects you, visit NTEU's [webpage](#).

"...to ensure that every federal employee is treated with dignity and respect."