

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-307, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro:

We write to ask that the 302(b) allocation for the FY2022 Legislative Branch appropriations bill be set at a level sufficient to account for a much-needed increase in staff pay and benefits. Specifically, we ask for a 21% increase in the Member Representational Allowance (MRA), committee budgets, and leadership office budgets for FY2022 that will be used to increase staff salaries.

For years, pay and benefits for the staff of Member offices, leadership offices, and committees have fallen farther and farther behind what is offered in the private sector. At the same time, the cost of living here in our nation's capital has risen substantially, placing opportunities such as homeownership, rental housing, and childcare out of reach for many. Thankfully, many House internships are now paid, thanks to our efforts last Congress, but the low salary available to entry-level staff continue to raise barriers to entry and advantage those who are already wealthy and connected. These realities have hamstrung the House in our ability to recruit and retain the talented and diverse workforce we need to serve the diversity and needs of the American people in the best way possible.

House staff salaries last year were effectively cut 20.7% from the Congressional Budget Office's (CBO) ten-year baseline projection for House staff salaries and expenses from 2011. It is no wonder that the average staff member leaves Congressional employment after only three years and that median salaries for some staff positions have dropped as much as 20% since 2010 when accounting for inflation. We urge you to take the need to replenish this funding when setting the 302(b) allocation for the Legislative Branch.

We also hope that your 302(b) figure will account for a need to offer more competitive benefits to staff. The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) has been asked to provide the House with a report on benefits currently available to employees and how they compare to comparable private-sector workplaces. A letter sent by Leader Hoyer, Chairman Jeffries, and House Administration Committee Chairwoman Lofgren on May 20th requested that the CAO explore the expected impact on staff recruitment, retention, and diversity if the House were to adopt additional benefits now increasingly common in the private sector or already in place for Senate employees. Such benefits might include reimbursement for non-covered adoption or fertility treatment, making House staff eligible for the Public Service Loan Repayment program, and offering child-care subsidies for staff who do not make use of the House Daycare.

If we as Members are to fulfill our responsibility to govern effectively for the people and deliver on our Majority's promises to renew faith in government by ensuring that Congress reflects the

American people we serve, we must be able to recruit and retain a diverse and talented workforce to help Members, leadership, and committees carry out their work. A 21% increase in Member Representational Allowance (MRA) funding for FY2022 to go towards staff salary would be an important first step. We appreciate your continued support for this effort, and we thank you for your leadership of the Appropriations Committee during this time when the House is working hard to address multiple crises and help our country build back better in a way that is lasting and effective.

Sincerely,



Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress

Gwen S. Moore
Member of Congress

Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress

Julia Brownley
Member of Congress

André Carson
Member of Congress

Joe Neguse
Member of Congress

Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress

Eric Swalwell.
Member of Congress

Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

Mondaire Jones
Member of Congress

Andy Levin
Member of Congress

Joaquin Castro.
Member of Congress

Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress

Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress

Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress

Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress

Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress

Marilyn Strickland
Member of Congress

Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress

Marc Veasey
Member of Congress

Kweisi Mfume
Member of Congress

Henry C. “Hank” Johnson Jr.
Member of Congress

Joe Courtney
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress

Kaiali'i Kahele
Member of Congress

Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress

Ed Perlmutter
Member of Congress

Jim Cooper
Member of Congress

Suzan K. DelBene
Member of Congress

Diana DeGette
Member of Congress

Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress

Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress

Ro Khanna
Member of Congress

Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress

Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress

Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress

Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress

Ted Deutch
Member of Congress

Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress

Teresa Leger Fernandez
Member of Congress

Nikema Williams
Member of Congress

Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress

Mark Takano
Member of Congress

Cori Bush
Member of Congress

Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress

Anthony G. Brown
Member of Congress

Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress

Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress

Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress

Juan Vargas
Member of Congress

Ritchie Torres
Member of Congress

Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress

Albio Sires
Member of Congress

Al Lawson
Member of Congress

Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress

John P. Sarbanes
Member of Congress

Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress

Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress

Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

Darren Soto
Member of Congress

James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

Kathy Castor
Member of Congress

Mike Thompson
Member of Congress

Paul Tonko
Member of Congress

David Trone
Member of Congress

Adam Smith
Member of Congress

Al Green
Member of Congress

Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress

Jake Auchincloss
Member of Congress

Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

Deborah K. Ross
Member of Congress

Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress

David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress

Jim Costa
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Salud O. Carbajal
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Marie Newman
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Jim Himes
Member of Congress

Lisa Blunt Rochester
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C. A. Dutch Ruppersberger
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Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
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Bill Foster
Member of Congress

Chrissy Houlahan
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Bill Pascrell Jr.
Member of Congress

Yvette D. Clarke
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Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress

Jackie Speier
Member of Congress

Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress

Jason Crow
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Scott H. Peters
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Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress

Steven Horsford
Member of Congress

Peter Welch
Member of Congress

Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress

Mike Doyle
Member of Congress

Karen Bass
Member of Congress

Doris Matsui
Member of Congress

Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress

Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.
Member of Congress

G. K. Butterfield
Member of Congress

Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress

Bradley S. Schneider
Member of Congress

Robert C. “Bobby” Scott
Member of Congress

Rick Larsen
Member of Congress

Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress

Jared Huffman
Member of Congress

Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress

J. Luis Correa
Member of Congress