

July 21, 2022

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Schumer and Minority Leader McConnell:

We, the undersigned organizations and individuals, urge you to require that no full-time Senate staff person is paid less than \$45,000 annually, matching the pay floor for congressional staff in the House of Representatives. Congress is fortunate to employ hard-working public servants whose skill, dedication, and patriotism are the lifeblood of the institution and an asset to the members for whom they work. Providing a minimum basic level of pay ensures that all Americans who wish to work for the Senate can have the opportunity to do so without undue economic hardship, which will serve to enhance the upper chamber's staff pipeline. Moreover, the minimum terms of employment for Senate staff should not be inferior to that of the House of Representatives or the Executive branch.

The Senate president pro tempore has the statutory authority to establish pay levels and rate for the Senate — a decision that can be made in consultation with the majority and minority leaders. We request you encourage the promulgation of an appropriate minimum pay rate. We note that House Speaker Nancy Pelosi issued a pay order that will require, by September 1, that all House staff be paid no less than \$45,000 annually.¹

Investing more resources into the congressional workforce, especially for those at the bottom of the pay scale, can reduce opportunities for regulatory capture by lobbyists, mitigate the risk of unintended negative policy outcomes through stronger staffing, and increase accountability of the federal government through expanded and knowledgeable oversight.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We welcome the opportunity to discuss this further. Please contact Taylor J. Swift, policy advisor at Demand Progress Action at taylor@demandprogress.org.

Sincerely,

American Family Voices
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO
College to Congress
Congressional Management Foundation
Demand Progress Action
DotGov.com
Fight for the Future
Fix the Court

¹ See, <https://www.speaker.gov/newsroom/5622>

GovTrack.us
Media Alliance
National Association of Assistant United States Attorneys
Professional Managers Association
Revolving Door Project
RootsAction.org
Senior Executives Association
Sunrise Movement

Norman Ornstein, American Enterprise Institute (emeritus)*
Robert Cook-Deegan, Arizona State University*
Laura Manley, Harvard Kennedy School*
Lorelei Kelly, Georgetown University*
James Hemm, New Jersey Association on Correction*

*= Affiliations listed for identification purposes only.

Cc:

The Honorable Patrick Leahy, Senate Pro Tempore and Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Richard Shelby, Ranking Member of the Senate Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Jack Reed, Chair of the Senate Legislative Branch Appropriations Subcommittee

The Honorable Mike Braun, Ranking Member of the Senate Legislative Branch Appropriations Subcommittee