

**WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-5) released the following statement today on the federal employee pay freeze included in the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2013:**

“I am extremely disappointed that Republicans are asking federal employees to take a freeze in pay for a third year in a row. Federal employees have already accepted two consecutive pay freezes with the knowledge that the savings would be applied toward meeting our nation’s fiscal challenges. At the same time Republicans were asking federal employees to contribute, they refused to ask the same of millionaires and billionaires.

“Republicans have asked federal employees to contribute \$60 billion in two pay freezes, \$15 billion in pension cuts for new employees to offset an extension of unemployment insurance, and a further \$78 billion in pension cuts for current employees to pay for their dismal budget reconciliation package. This represents a total cut to federal employees of \$153 billion in pay and benefits. With this third pay freeze, they are now asking for \$30 billion more.

“America’s federal employees, Republicans ought to remember, are themselves middle-class workers and were hit just as hard as the rest of our middle class by the recession and the rising costs of living. Punishing them unfairly for their choice of career only harms our ability to recruit and retain the best workforce possible for the American people.

“There is much in this bill to support, as it funds the Veterans Affairs programs that provide critical care to America’s veterans and wounded warriors and provides for the construction of military facilities that support our defense. However, it is important to remember that the Veterans Affairs doctors, nurses, physical therapists, and hospital administrators are all federal employees who will be affected by this unfair pay freeze. For their sake, and for those whom they serve so ably, let’s provide our federal employees with the compensation they deserve and that they have earned through their service. I hope the final version of this appropriations bill does not include this pay freeze.”