



March 20, 2018

Dear Representative,

On behalf of the two million dedicated federal and postal employees represented by the 30 organizations comprising the Federal-Postal Coalition, I write to urge you to oppose efforts to reinstitute the Holman Rule in calendar year 2018 as part of Section 5 of House Resolution 787.

Under the Holman Rule, which was adopted as part of the House's standing rules for the first session of the 115th Congress, amendments can be offered during floor debate of an appropriations bill to do any of the following: reduce the number of employees at a federal agency at will; reduce the salaries of those employees, or even one particular employee; or, eliminate (or fire) one particular federal position (or employee). In 2017, through its use, we saw both individuals and federal offices unfairly targeted, resulting in further politicization of professional, career officials and our nation's merit-based civil service.

Notably, the Holman Rule is redundant and unnecessary since current House rules allow for amendments to reduce federal spending through regular order, and Congress has the power to change federal pay or eliminate jobs through the authorization process. Further, the Rules Committee can make any number of amendments in order when a specific appropriations bill is being considered by the House of Representatives. Without the Holman Rule, Congress retains multiple avenues for saving money in the federal budget.

While the Holman Rule may be envisioned as a way to make it easier to give individual Members an opportunity to propose ways to save money or to reform federal agencies in the appropriations process, doing so from the House floor and not during regular order further threatens a process that already is rarely completed by the start of the fiscal year. Its use in 2017 provides evidence of further eroding Congress' ability to effect well-thought out and executed policy for certain departments and offices.

Additionally, reinstatement of this rule has major consequences for the federal workforce. Decisions that affect the workforce should be made through the authorizing process following hearings, testimony and substantive debate on each federal agency and its needs – not after ten minutes of heated debate on the House floor. Time and time again, arbitrary cuts to the federal workforce and its salaries and programs have cost the federal government more money than ultimately saved.

More than 30 years ago, the House wisely repealed the Holman Rule because it was bad policy, created animosity among Members and failed to achieve its intended results. I ask for your support to block further use of the Holman Rule in the second session of the 115th Congress.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. Should you have any questions or concerns, I can be reached at 202-662-2801.

Sincerely,

Kori Blalock Keller Chair
Federal-Postal Coalition