

Sample Letter (do not copy verbatim; use talking points provided to craft your own personalized letter to the Senator. It is VERY important your message be personal and not a form letter. Please take the time to craft your own email or fax, using the talking points on FEA's Web site as a suggested outline. DO NOT COPY THE INFORMATION ON THIS PAGE VERBATIM.)

Senator Daniel Akaka
United States Senate
141 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
Tel: (202) 224-6361
Fax: (202) 224-2126

Dear Senator Akaka,

I urge you to oppose the Office of Personnel Management's proposal to replace Non-Foreign Cost of Living Adjustments with Locality Pay.

I am a civilian Department of Defense employee, working in the DoD school system on Guam. Our schools, as part of the Domestic Dependents Elementary and Secondary Schools (DDESS) system, rank among the best schools anywhere in the U.S. Thanks in no small part to the quality of our education staff, our schools rank near the top nationwide on standardized assessment scores and have been nationally recognized for closing achievement gaps between minority and non-minority students.

OPM's effort to replace COLAs with Locality Pay would make it virtually impossible for DDESS to continue recruiting and retaining the excellent staff that make these results possible. Educators' salaries on Guam are among the lowest anywhere. As a result, public (non DoD) schools on Guam have been suffering from more acute teacher shortages every year, as school systems from Hawaii and the continental U.S. draw teachers and staff away from the island with much better pay and benefits.

If pay for the staff of DDESS schools is based on what the local Guam school systems pay, DDESS will no longer be able to attract high quality educators. As a result, the quality of education offered to military dependents on Guam will decrease significantly and military quality of life on the island will be irreparably harmed.

I urge you not to allow this to happen. Do not allow OPM to force locality pay upon DDESS educators and other civilian employees on Guam.

Thank you,

(your name and address)