

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 27, 2018

The Honorable Gene Dodaro
Comptroller General of the United States
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro:

We write to request that the Government Accountability Office (GAO) conduct a review of employee pay, hiring, and promotion in the federal workforce by gender. It has been nearly a decade since GAO last addressed these critical issues. New research and analysis is necessary to identify the status of pay equity in the federal workforce, including the implications of race and ethnicity for the gender pay gap.

According to the National Partnership for Women & Families, women earn, on average, only 80 cents for every dollar earned by a man – equivalent to a pay gap of \$10,086 each year. This gap is even larger for women of color. African-American women make 63 cents on the dollar, while Hispanic women make only 54 cents, compared with white, non-Hispanic men. Pay inequities remain regardless of education, occupation, experience, age, geography – or service in the federal workforce.

In 2009, GAO's report on the women's pay in the federal workforce (GAO-09-279) identified a 7 cent gap in pay between men and women remained unexplained by any difference in experience, education or other relevant characteristics. This pay differential amounted to a loss in income by women federal workers of \$4,942 in 2007 – the last year of GAO's study – alone.^[1] This is a significant loss in pay that hinders the federal government's ability to recruit and retain talented individuals who want to contribute their skills to serve and help solve the major economic, social, and security problems of the 21st century.

In light of these facts, we request the GAO's assistance in addressing the following questions:

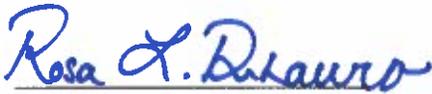
1. What is the median pay for men and women in the federal workforce by race and ethnicity, occupation, agency, region, years of experience, age, education level, bargaining unit status, leave record, disability status, and veteran status?
2. What is the average pay difference between men and women in the federal workforce by race and ethnicity, occupation, agency, region, years of experience, age, education level, bargaining unit status, leave record, disability status, and veteran status? What proportion of the differences in pay remain unexplained by these factors? If unexplained variation is identified – such as in the 2009 report – what other factors excluded from the statistical analyses contribute to the pay differential?

^[1] According to an analysis by *The Hill* of 2007 pay data from the Office of Personnel Management.

3. How has the pay gap between men and women federal workers changed over time? How does the pay gap for recent cohorts of employees compare to earlier cohorts? Based on these trends, what should we expect the pay gap between men and women to be for employees entering the federal workforce in 2018?
4. How do the hiring and promotion rates for men and women employees differ by race and ethnicity, occupation, agency, region, years of experience, age, education level, bargaining unit status, leave record, disability status, and veteran status?
5. How have efforts initiated by the federal government to enforce anti-pay discrimination laws, including salary transparency initiatives, mentoring programs, and agency-specific gender data analyses, impacted pay equity between men and women employees in the federal workforce?

Thank you in advance for your immediate attention to this request. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact a member of our staff. We look forward to hearing from you on this important issue.

Sincerely,



Rosa L. DeLauro
Member of Congress



Patty Murray
United States Senator



Katherine Clark
Member of Congress



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator