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December 1, 2008

The Honorable Barack Obama
c/o Presidential Transition Offices
451 6th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear President-Elect Obama:

On behalf of the members of Federally Employed Women (FEW), we wanted to extend our congratulations to you as our newly elected 44th President of the United States. We have worked with you and your staff over the last couple of years on issues of importance to federal workers, and very much appreciate your support. As a matter of fact, for the 109th Congress, you scored a perfect 100% on the FEW Scorecard!

FEW is a private, non-profit organization founded in 1968 shortly after government issued Executive Order 11375 which added sex-discrimination to the list of prohibited discrimination within the Federal Government. FEW has grown into a proactive organization with over 100 chapters in ten regions throughout the United States. FEW serves the more than one million federally employed women (both civilian and military) and is the only organization dedicated solely to eliminating sex discrimination in the federal workplace.

As a private organization, FEW works as an advocacy group to improve the status of women employed by the Federal government. This includes contact with Congress to encourage progressive legislation. FEW national officers also meet with management officials at federal agencies to demonstrate support of the Federal Women's Program (which the Office of Personnel Management created in response to Executive Order 11375), or FWP, to encourage officials to support the program and to obtain insight on the effectiveness of the FWP at agency and local levels.

OPM regulations implementing Public Law 92-261 (The Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972) required that each federal agency designate a FWP Manager to advise the Director of EEO on matters affecting the employment and advancement of women. This law also requires that federal agencies allocate sufficient resources for their Federal Women's Programs. However, our members remain concerned about the viability and enforcement of the FWP in federal agencies. Therefore, we have asked the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to compile and provide us with a list of all FWP representatives in each agency. We have not received this list yet.

We also wanted to take this opportunity to alert you about the results of a recent survey we completed of our members on the top legislative priority issues they would like to see enacted during the 111th Congress. Many of these you have supported in your role as Senator and most of them would help alleviate the expected shortfall of federal workers due to the large numbers of expected retirements over the next five years. Here are the results of this survey in ranked order.

1. Equal Rights Amendment (ERA):

While four more states still have to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment, lobbying has begun at the federal level to ensure that once these four states do so, the Congress will approve the enactment of an Equal Rights Amendment.

2. Unused Sick Leave:

This bill would compensate retiring federal employees for unused sick leave up to \$10,000. Currently they receive no compensation for unused sick leave upon retirement.

3. Government Pension Offset (GPO)/Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP):

These are two egregious Social Security provisions that have a disproportionate and adverse impact on women covered under the Civil Service Retirement Service. The GPO lowers the spousal benefit by two-thirds; the WEP lowers by 60% her Social Security benefit if she worked for the federal government and the private sector during her career.

4. Rehiring Retirees:

This bill would ease restrictions on rehiring federal retirees, allowing them to receive the full salary of their new job without any offset against their retirement annuity.

5. Diversity in the SES Act:

This bill would improve oversight of the Senior Executive Service (SES) to better reflect the diversity of the federal workforce.

6. FERS Redeposit:

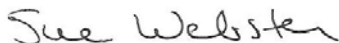
This bill would allow individuals who return to government service after receiving a refund of retirement contributions to recapture credit for the service covered by that refund.

7. Paid Parental Leave:

This bill would provide federal employees with four to eight weeks of paid leave upon the birth or adoption of a child.

We look forward to working with you and your staff to move these initiatives forward in the Congress and signed into law. We also stand ready to assist you in any issues that come up with respect to the federal workers in general and federally employed women in particular.

Again, congratulations on your successful election.



FEW National President



FEW Vice President for Congressional Relations