

### *Largest federal employee union weighs in on deal to end 16-day shutdown*

WASHINGTON, Oct. 16, 2013 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- American Federation of Government Employees National President J. David Cox Sr. today issued the following statement:

"On behalf of the 670,000 federal employees represented by AFGE, I am thrilled that a deal was reached to put our members back to work and restore the services American taxpayers count on. But make no mistake about it, this is not a happy day for federal employees. The Senate deal is simply a brief reprieve from the suffering federal employees and their families have endured for the past sixteen days. We cannot accept another government shutdown in just a few short weeks; federal workers and the public they serve have suffered enough.

"Countless federal workers have been forced to choose between paying their mortgage and feeding their families; buying gas to get to work or paying the electric company. Countless members have called me in tears looking for answers to the financial burden this reckless shutdown has put on their families.

"Federal workers are also deeply frustrated by the impact the shutdown has had on their ability to serve the public. These employees wanted nothing more than to go to work and provide for their families and their country, but were turned away by shameless politics.

"When federal employees look back on this fiasco, they will remember the veterans who were prevented from filing for disability benefits, the patients turned away from cancer treatment trials, the polluters who were left to foul the air and water, the miners who died from lack of Mine Safety and Health Administration enforcement. They will think of the homebuyers who couldn't apply for FHA mortgages, the soldiers who had to make do until weapons were repaired and delivered.

"The economic and social costs of shutting down vital government services for weeks will be felt

## AFGE Statement on Debt Ceiling and Shutdown Deal

Written by Australian Business

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for months and possibly years. Backlogs will eventually be processed; and federal workers' savings will slowly be restored. But the taint of this outrageous effort to undermine the Affordable Care Act will likely affect government service for a long time.

"The good credit that many federal employees worked so hard to achieve will have been damaged at least as severely as the reputation of politicians who downplayed the seriousness of breaching the debt ceiling. Thousands could not manage through the shutdown on goodwill alone, and they lost their apartments, daycare slots, and good credit scores.

"I am glad that lawmakers were able to come together to end this crisis without giving in to a radical group of hostage takers. Particular credit goes to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, who exhibited extraordinary leadership during this trying time and held firm to his convictions. But those who perpetrated this inexcusable catastrophe on the American people should be turned out of office in 2014.

"In the coming weeks AFGE will fight all attempts to cut federal pay, retirement, or health care as Congress hashes out FY 14 spending levels. Federal employees are nobody's bargaining chip. Our message to lawmakers is clear: No more cuts, no more furloughs, no more sacrifices on the backs of hardworking Americans. We will also fight to protect Social Security and Medicare benefits from any reductions, including cuts from the so-called chained CPI."

*The American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) is the largest federal employee union, representing 670,000 workers in the federal government and the government of the District of Columbia*

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