

# United States Senate

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## U.S. SENATORS INTRODUCE BILL TO REPLACE FY2013 SEQUESTRATION CUTS

*Replaces cuts with freeze on Members of Congress and other federal employees' pay, federal attrition*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – A leading group of U.S. senators took the first step today to protect national security by unveiling legislation to replace the draconian defense cuts scheduled to take effect in 2013 with more responsible reductions in federal spending.

U.S. Senators Jon Kyl (R-Ariz.), John McCain (R-Ariz.), Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), John Cornyn (R-Texas), Kelly Ayotte (R-N.H.), and Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) introduced the “Down Payment to Protect National Security Act of 2012,” which replaces the approximate \$110 billion in across-the-board federal spending cuts for 2013 with sufficient savings derived from a federal employee pay freeze and employee attrition.

“Defense Secretary Leon Panetta has called the cuts to defense spending ‘devastating,’ likening them to ‘shooting ourselves in the head,’” the senators said in a joint statement. “Although the Joint Committee on Deficit Reduction was unable to reach an agreement to reduce the deficit over the next ten years, the prudent path forward would be to replace all of the across-the-board cuts with an equal amount of responsible savings. As Congress considers funding for the next fiscal year, we should at least be able to agree to one-year in targeted spending reductions, instead of the draconian, across-the-board cuts resulting from sequestration.”

The bill specifically extends the federal employee pay freeze – first implemented by President Barack Obama – through June 2014, and restricts federal hiring to only two employees for every three leaving, until the size of the federal government workforce is reduced by five percent.

According to a January 30 report from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, federal employees are compensated 16 percent higher than their private sector counterparts, and enjoy a 48 percent advantage in benefits.

“During a time of persistent unemployment, stagnant economic growth, and record deficits, it’s inexcusable that federal employees are being compensated so much more than the taxpayers in the private sector who subsidize those federal benefits” the senators concluded.

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