

February 25, 2013

Jeffrey Zients
Deputy Director for Management
White House Office of Management and Budget
Executive Office Building
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Zients,

With Congress facing sequestration like nearly every other federal agency, I conducted a top to bottom review of my office and eliminated seven full time positions over the past year while sending back more than \$242,800 in office budget authority. While this has required doing more with less, we have succeeded in maintaining the same quality of constituent services and level of representation with a leaner team. Sequestration will require managers of other agencies to make similar decisions, and with smart leadership and a thoughtful re-evaluation of missions and setting of priorities, the quality of services can similarly be preserved.

At the same time the administration is warning sequestration could force laying off or furloughing U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents, Defense civilian employees, or food safety inspectors, the federal government is also soliciting applicants for numerous lower priority jobs. Not filling the jobs advertised in just these ten vacancy announcements could save as much as \$1.4 million that could be redirected towards more essential jobs being targeted for sequestration savings:

- A staff assistant at the Department Of Labor to answer phones, salary range from \$51,630 to \$81,204 per year;
- Ten drivers for the State Department, pay ranges from \$22.76 to \$26.45 per hour.
- A policy coordinator for the Department of Health and Human Services to attend and facilitate meetings and coordinate policies within the department, salary range from \$51,630 to \$81,204 per year;
- A Director for the Air Force History and Museums Policies and Programs to provide guidance of historical matters throughout the Department of the Air Force, salary ranges from \$143,600 to \$165,300 per year;
- An analyst for the Legislative Affairs Office of the Marine Corps to provide representation to Capitol Hill, salary range from \$80,000 to \$90,000 per year;
- A director for the Government Employee Services Division of the Department Of Agriculture improve services to federal employees, salary ranges from \$119,554 to \$179,700 per year;
- A counsel for the Morris K. Udall Scholarship Foundation, salary range from \$130,000 to \$155,000 per year;
- An executive assistant at the Department of Agriculture Forest Service to prepare itineraries and briefing and information material packages, salary ranges from \$47,448 to \$57,408 per year; and

- An Executive Staff Officer for the Air Force to represent the Director of Staff at meetings, write draft reports, memos, and e-mails for the Director, and prepare responses to correspondence, e-mails, and requests for information, salary ranges from \$71,674 to \$93,175 per year.

Are any of these positions more important than an air traffic controller, a border patrol officer, a food inspector, a TSA screener, or a civilian supporting our men and women in combat in Afghanistan?

I have attached a select list of these job vacancies now being advertised on USAjobs.gov, which could be eliminated along with many other unfilled non-essential positions across the federal government. Instituting such a hiring freeze and re-assigning any of the necessary duties associated with each to current employees will allow federal agencies to adapt to the current fiscal realities without laying off or furloughing civil servants who are performing truly critical or absolutely necessary functions.

Additionally, has the administration issued, or does it plan to issue, guidance to agencies regarding savings that could be achieved through attrition of non-essential positions?

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I would appreciate a response no later than April 1, 2013. It is important that we as public officials lead by example and I look forward to continuing to work with you to save taxpayers money and better prioritize government spending.

Sincerely,


Tom A. Coburn, M.D.

Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security
and Governmental Affairs

Position title: General Counsel
Agency: Morris K. Udall Scholarship and Excellence in National Environmental Policy Foundation
Salary: \$130,000 to \$155,000 per year
Duties included: Primary responsibility for legal affairs and representing the Foundation in meetings and communications with congressional staff, other federal agency attorneys and high-ranking officials, and participates in interagency committees and projects.
Job announcement: <https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/337018900>

Position title: Staff Assistant
Agency: Department Of Labor Veterans Employment and Training Services
Salary: \$51,630 to \$81,204 per year
Duties included: Perform administrative duties, such as scheduling appointments and meetings, screening calls and visitors, arranging travel and answering inquiries.
Job announcement: <https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/337430300>

Position title: Policy Coordinator
Agency: Department of Health and Human Services
Salary: \$51,630 to \$81,204 per year
Duties included: Coordinate policy development within Secretary's office and with the agencies within the Department; Attend and facilitate meetings with the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and Executive Secretary, outside groups, or Department officials; and Develop background or summary papers to acquaint the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and Executive Secretary with program policies, regulations, and current developments.
Job announcement: <https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/337199200>

Position title: Program Analyst
Agency: Department of the Navy U.S. Marine Corps Legislative Affairs Office
Salary: \$80,000 to \$90,000 per year
Duties included: Develops and conducts legislative affairs and serves as the "Marine and Family Programs Division Action Officer" for legislative matters by providing representation to Capitol Hill.
Job announcement: <https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/337583400>

Position title: Director
Agency: Department Of Agriculture's Government Employee Services Division
Salary: \$119,554 to \$179,700 per year
Duties included: Responsible for "service enhancement and market growth in strategic business units centered on services to and around federal employees."
Job announcement: <https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/338206700>

Position title: Executive Assistant
Agency: Department of Agriculture Forest Service

Salary: \$47,448 to \$57,408 per year
Duties included: Responsible for the analysis, design, and implementation of communications utilizing new electronic communication technology and multiple source data; Provide "confidential and personal services on a broad range of controversial resources, economic, and personnel matters managing assignments of a highly confidential nature;" Provide scheduling/meeting information, briefing materials, and government travel arrangements; Prepare itineraries, briefing and information material packages and maps.

Job announcement: <https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/337502300>

Position title: Motor Vehicle Operator (ten vacancies to be filled)

Agency: Department Of State

Salary: \$22.76 to \$26.45 per hour

Duties included: Drive and operate vans, trucks, and passenger vehicles on shuttle runs, special, long distance, and overnight trips; Perform maintenance and minor repairs on vehicles that includes but is not limited to changing flat tires and checking vehicle oil; and Assist passengers and loads and/or unload luggage.

Job announcement: <https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/335758900>

Position title: Director

Agency: Air Force History and Museums Policies and Programs

Salary: \$143,600 to \$165,300 per year

Duties included: Provide guidance and oversight in the formulation of strategic plans and policies pertaining to historical matters throughout the Department of the Air Force; Provide broad direction and guidance to the Air Force History Office, the Air Force Historical Research Agency and the Heritage Program including the National Museum of the USAF; and Formulate the Air Force historical stance on the planning and execution processes of politically sensitive historical events.

Job announcement: <https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/338013800>

Position title: Director of Communications and Education

Agency: Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board

Salary: \$119,554 to \$165,300 per year

Duties included: The Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board (FRTIB) is an independent Federal Agency "with a single mission: To administer the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) solely in the interest of its participants and beneficiaries." The TSP is "widely considered to be one of the best retirement plans in the world and a model for defined contribution plans" and the FRTIB is "seeking a champion for its continual improvement." The Director of Communications and Education oversees liaison and communication activities with federal agencies regarding the TSP and supports associated activities with the Agency and participant education and training programs.

Job announcement: <https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/337345800>

Position title: Executive Staff Officer

Agency: Department of the Air Force

Salary: \$71,674 to \$93,175 per year

Duties included: Participate in the management of daily support operations for the Air Force Cryptologic Office; Represent the Director of Staff at meetings and write draft reports, memos, and e-mails for the Director; and Prepare responses to correspondence, e-mails, and requests for information.

Job announcement: <https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/337999500>