

# Hoyer Advocates for Increased Staff Pay to Attract & Retain Experienced, Diverse Staff

*Earlier this month, Majority Leader Steny Hoyer [testified](#) before the House Select Committee on Modernization and highlighted the need for the House to offer competitive salaries and benefits in order to attract and retain talented, experienced, and diverse Congressional staff – particularly after an intense workload over the past year responding to the pandemic and its ensuing economic crisis, and after the trauma of the January 6<sup>th</sup> insurrection. Following his testimony, Leader Hoyer and Democratic Caucus Chair Hakeem Jeffries wrote a [letter](#) to appropriators urging an increase in office budgets to boost staff pay. Here's a look at coverage of these efforts:*

## **Roll Call:** [Hoyer and Jeffries to pitch 20 percent boost for office funds to retain staff](#)

**“Leaders in the House are raising the alarm that the sluggish growth of staffer pay makes recruiting and retaining talented staff difficult and are urging appropriators to include a 20 percent increase for office budgets for fiscal 2022.”**

“...Majority Leader Steny H. Hoyer and Democratic Caucus Chairman Hakeem Jeffries wrote to Appropriations Chair Rosa DeLauro and Legislative Branch Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Tim Ryan advocating for the boost to the Members’ Representational Allowance in the upcoming Legislative Branch spending bill.”

“‘Many have been serving as Congressional staff for years out of a deep sense of duty, choosing not to pursue or accept competitive offers from the private sector in order to remain in public service,’ wrote Hoyer and Jeffries. **‘Their commendable sacrifices and contributions ought to be met with the raises and benefit increases they have surely earned through their hard work and dedication.’**”

“They also say recruits eager to commit their careers to public service are deterred by less competitive salaries and benefits even when compared with executive branch jobs. This dynamic also affects district offices, where staff ties to their communities are hard to replicate.”

## **The Hill:** [Democratic leaders push to boost congressional staff pay](#)

**“House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) and Caucus Chairman Hakeem Jeffries (D-N.Y.) on Wednesday made a push to increase the maximum pay for House staffers, saying salaries have become less competitive over time.”**

**“‘Many have been serving as Congressional staff for years out of a deep sense of duty, choosing not to pursue or accept competitive offers from the private sector in order to remain in public service,’ the pair wrote in a letter to Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.) and Legislative branch subcommittee Chairman Tim Ryan (D-Ohio).”**

“‘Their commendable sacrifices and contributions ought to be met with the raises and benefit increases they have surely earned through their hard work and dedication,’ they wrote. In the letter, they requested

a 20 percent increase for Members' Representational Allowance funds, the amount allotted to offices and committees to conduct official business and pay staff.”

### **Bloomberg Government: Congress Eager to Increase Staff Pay But Fear Voter Backlash**

“The latest effort to raise staffer pay is getting a boost from top Democratic leaders, including Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) and Democratic Caucus Chair Hakeem Jeffries (D-N.Y.). Both urged a temporary panel of lawmakers focused on modernizing the House to prioritize staffer retention through increased pay and benefits.”

“Each year we lose talented and experienced staff with deep institutional knowledge to the private sector because we do not offer competitive compensation and benefits,” Hoyer said at a recent hearing of the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress. ‘At the same time, we are failing to recruit and retain the more diverse workforce that we have said we want to attract.’”

“In the past 20 years, costs of living increased as the inflation-adjusted median pay for most staff positions declined, some by more than 20%, according to a study by the Congressional Research Service.”

### **Roll Call: Modernization Committee eyes accountability and new proposals**

“House Majority Leader Steny H. Hoyer of Maryland and Democratic Caucus Chairman Hakeem Jeffries of New York both tuned in to the members day hearing last week to voice ideas for how to make pay and benefits for staffers more competitive with the private sector and other federal employers in order to retain talented staff...Hoyer called for an exploration of cutting the long-standing linkage between lawmaker pay and staff salaries, which caps staff pay from being more than members.”

“Kilmer pointed out that Hoyer, House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy and others came before the panel two years ago with ideas. But the fact that the committee’s work has been prioritized and extended and that leaders continue to engage is evidence that the bipartisan and solutions-based approach of the modernization panel holds value for top lawmakers on both sides of the aisle.”

### **Business Insider: Capitol Hill staffers are burned out and heading for the exits after a hellish year bookmarked by a pandemic and an insurrection**

“While private-sector employers have been investing in their workforces with better pay and benefits policies, Congress has failed to do the same,” Hoyer testified on April 15 at a House Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress hearing....Increased levels of staffing, higher pay, and more opportunities for advancement and career growth were necessary to staunch the flow of talent heading out the revolving door, Kristine Simmons of the Partnership for Public Service told Insider.”

### **Punchbowl News: Hoyer, Jeffries call for higher staff pay. Don't celebrate yet.**

“One of the biggest issues facing Congress is how to retain experienced staffers, since they’re the ones who actually run the place. And it has only gotten worse following the Covid-19 pandemic and the Jan. 6 insurrection.”

“During a Thursday hearing of the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress, two top Democrats -- House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer of Maryland and Democratic Caucus Chair Hakeem Jeffries of New York-- were among those who called for raising staffer pay.”

“Many lawmakers and aides believe higher pay could help convince experienced staffers to stay put and begin to counter the ‘brain drain’ on Capitol Hill. It’s pretty tough to say no to a company offering twice your salary.”