ASPA AND NAPA OFFER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FIXING POLITICAL APPOINTMENTS PROCESS & STRENGTHENING THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE

Washington, DC – We have a broken political appointments process and we face an increasing number of complex demands on our federal workforce, in which we have significantly reduced our investment.

The American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) and the National Academy for Public Administration (NAPA) continued the conversation about administrative challenges that face the country and offered bold recommendations to Congress and the President to address them. The second release in the Memos to National Leaders series introduced innovative ideas for fixing the political appointments process and strengthening the federal workforce with a specific emphasis on reducing the number of political appointees and enhancing federal employee pay scales by recommending the end of uniform pay increases.

The Sept. 24 event featured former directors of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Janice Lachance and Linda Springer who shared their experience with the political appointment process and support for the memos’ recommendations to strengthen the human resource capital of the federal government.

Lachance in introductory comments noted that “ASPA and NAPA are offering a head start” to the next administration. “Building an administration from scratch is a surmountable task that even the most skilled executive would find daunting. These memos frame the issue and elevate the topic,” said Lachance in praising the timeliness and relevance of the Memos series.

Her support for the guidance that the memos offer to the President and Congress was echoed by Springer who talked about her personal experience with the political appointment process and the need for “getting the right people” for the job. Springer worked in the private sector for 25 years before joining public service.

She pointed out that there are three things needed to work in the public sector: management experience, leadership experience and willingness to serve. She emphasized that the conversation about public service has often been focused on affordability rather than what needs to be done and how many people are needed to do it.

The memos’ authors James Pfiffner, NAPA Fellow and professor of public policy and director of the Doctoral program at George Mason University, as well as Rex Facer, member of the Federal Salary Council and professor at Brigham Young University, also discussed the recommendations.
As the most prominent public affairs organizations, ASPA and NAPA launched the Memos to National Leaders series in an effort to reduce political rhetoric and offer practical, but innovative solutions to some of the nation’s most pressing administrative challenges.

On the political appointments process, the recommendations include:

- A limit on the number of political appointees established by Congress
- Presidents should aim to reduce the number of Senate-confirmed positions in management positions and part-time, commission, and advisory posts.

On strengthening the federal workforce, the authors recommend:

- Ending the practice of uniform pay increases for GS employees and allow for grade-level adjustments.
- Expanding the pay ranges within the existing GS pay system to allow for greater pay progression within GS grade levels.

To view the full Memos to National Leaders, visit [www.memostoleaders.org](http://www.memostoleaders.org).

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