

LISA MURKOWSKI  
ALASKA

COMMITTEES:  
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
RANKING MEMBER

APPROPRIATIONS

HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR,  
AND PENSIONS

INDIAN AFFAIRS

## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0203

(202) 224-6665

(202) 224-5301 FAX

510 L STREET, SUITE 600  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501-1956  
(907) 271-3735

101 12TH AVENUE, ROOM 329  
FAIRBANKS, AK 99701-6278  
(907) 456-0233

800 GLACIER AVENUE, SUITE 101  
JUNEAU, AK 99801  
(907) 586-7277

805 FRONTAGE ROAD, SUITE 105  
KENAI, AK 99611-9104  
(907) 283-5808

4079 TONGASS AVENUE, SUITE 204  
KETCHIKAN, AK 99901-5526  
(907) 225-6880

851 EAST WESTPOINT DRIVE, SUITE 307  
WASILLA, AK 99654-7142  
(907) 376-7665

November 6, 2012

The Honorable John Berry  
Director  
Office of Personnel Management  
1900 E Street, NW, Room 5H30  
Washington, DC 20415

Dear Director Berry:

I write to express serious concerns about the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) significant delays in processing retirement annuities. While these delays have been ongoing for a period of time, the situation has significantly worsened. I was recently informed that it is taking between 172 and 291 days for OPM to process retired federal employees' paperwork and that there is currently a backlog of about 40,000 pending retirement cases. Both of these numbers are unacceptable.

This issue is particularly concerning in my home state of Alaska, where the federal government accounts for about 25 percent of the total workforce. A provision of law passed in 2009 provides an incentive for certain federal employees to retire by the end of this year, meaning an estimated 10 percent of Alaska's federal workforce could retire and be added to the OPM backlog in the next two months. These federal employees could face almost a year's delay before they see the benefits they've accumulated in years of public service. That must change. I understand OPM began working in January 2012 to upgrade its systems to process retirement annuities more quickly, but those updates are still seven months away, and retiring federal employees in Alaska simply cannot wait for these upgrades to be put in place, especially since the federal government is encouraging them to retire by December 31, 2012. Due to the large number of federal employees in Alaska who are expected to retire this year, I urge you to prioritize the paperwork of Alaskans retiring from federal service. Many of these individuals have served their country with distinction for decades, and we must honor our obligations and commitments to them in a timely manner.

I look forward to working with you to ensure the more timely processing of retirement annuities for federal workers. Thank you for your attention to this request; should you have any questions please have your staff contact Miles Baker of my office at 202-224-8014.

Sincerely,



Lisa Murkowski  
United States Senator