

Public Law 108–201
108th Congress

An Act

To amend the provisions of title 5, United States Code, to provide for workforce flexibilities and certain Federal personnel provisions relating to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and for other purposes.

Feb. 24, 2004
[S. 610]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “NASA Flexibility Act of 2004”.

NASA Flexibility
Act of 2004.
5 USC 101 note.

SEC. 2. COMPENSATION FOR CERTAIN EXCEPTED PERSONNEL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subparagraph (A) of section 203(c)(2) of the National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958 (42 U.S.C. 2473(c)(2)(A)) is amended by striking “the highest rate of grade 18 of the General Schedule of the Classification Act of 1949, as amended,” and inserting “the rate of basic pay payable for level III of the Executive Schedule.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall take effect on the first day of the first pay period beginning on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

42 USC 2473
note.

SEC. 3. WORKFORCE AUTHORITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subpart I of part III of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after chapter 97, as added by section 841(a)(2) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (Public Law 107–296; 116 Stat. 2229), the following:

**“CHAPTER 98—NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE
ADMINISTRATION**

“Sec.

“9801. Definitions.

“9802. Planning, notification, and reporting requirements.

“9803. Restrictions.

“9804. Recruitment, redesignation, and relocation bonuses.

“9805. Retention bonuses.

“9806. Term appointments.

“9807. Pay authority for critical positions.

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“9809. Science and technology scholarship program.

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“9811. Travel and transportation expenses of certain new appointees.

“9812. Annual leave enhancements.

“9813. Limited appointments to Senior Executive Service positions.

“9814. Qualifications pay.

“9815. Reporting requirement.

“§ 9801. Definitions

“For purposes of this chapter—

“(1) the term ‘Administration’ means the National Aeronautics and Space Administration;

“(2) the term ‘Administrator’ means the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration;

“(3) the term ‘critical need’ means a specific and important safety, management, engineering, science, research, or operations requirement of the Administration’s mission that the Administration is unable to fulfill because the Administration lacks the appropriate employees because—

“(A) of the inability to fill positions; or

“(B) employees do not possess the requisite skills;

“(4) the term ‘employee’ means an individual employed in or under the Administration;

“(5) the term ‘workforce plan’ means the plan required under section 9802(a);

“(6) the term ‘appropriate committees of Congress’ means—

“(A) the Committees on Government Reform, Science, and Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

“(B) the Committees on Governmental Affairs, Commerce, Science, and Transportation, and Appropriations of the Senate;

“(7) the term ‘redesignation bonus’ means a bonus under section 9804 paid to an individual described in subsection (a)(2) thereof;

“(8) the term ‘supervisor’ has the meaning given such term by section 7103(a)(10); and

“(9) the term ‘management official’ has the meaning given such term by section 7103(a)(11).

Deadlines.

“§ 9802. Planning, notification, and reporting requirements

“(a) Not later than 90 days before exercising any of the workforce authorities made available under this chapter, the Administrator shall submit a written plan to the appropriate committees of Congress. Such plan shall be approved by the Office of Personnel Management.

“(b) A workforce plan shall include a description of—

“(1) each critical need of the Administration and the criteria used in the identification of that need;

“(2)(A) the functions, approximate number, and classes or other categories of positions or employees that—

“(i) address critical needs; and

“(ii) would be eligible for each authority proposed to be exercised under this chapter; and

“(B) how the exercise of those authorities with respect to the eligible positions or employees involved would address each critical need identified under paragraph (1);

“(3)(A) any critical need identified under paragraph (1) which would not be addressed by the authorities made available under this chapter; and

“(B) the reasons why those needs would not be so addressed;

“(4) the specific criteria to be used in determining which individuals may receive the benefits described under sections 9804 and 9805 (including the criteria for granting bonuses in the absence of a critical need), and how the level of those benefits will be determined;

“(5) the safeguards or other measures that will be applied to ensure that this chapter is carried out in a manner consistent with merit system principles;

“(6) the means by which employees will be afforded the notification required under subsections (c) and (d)(1)(B);

“(7) the methods that will be used to determine if the authorities exercised under this chapter have successfully addressed each critical need identified under paragraph (1);

“(8)(A) the recruitment methods used by the Administration before the enactment of this chapter to recruit highly qualified individuals; and

“(B) the changes the Administration will implement after the enactment of this chapter in order to improve its recruitment of highly qualified individuals, including how it intends to use—

“(i) nongovernmental recruitment or placement agencies; and

“(ii) Internet technologies; and

“(9) any workforce-related reforms required to resolve the findings and recommendations of the Columbia Accident Investigation Board, the extent to which those recommendations were accepted, and, if necessary, the reasons why any of those recommendations were not accepted.

“(c) Not later than 60 days before first exercising any of the workforce authorities made available under this chapter, the Administrator shall provide to all employees the workforce plan and any additional information which the Administrator considers appropriate.

“(d)(1)(A) The Administrator may from time to time modify the workforce plan. Any modification to the workforce plan shall be submitted to the Office of Personnel Management for approval by the Office before the modification may be implemented.

“(B) Not later than 60 days before implementing any such modifications, the Administrator shall provide an appropriately modified plan to all employees of the Administration and to the appropriate committees of Congress.

“(2) Any reference in this chapter or any other provision of law to the workforce plan shall be considered to include any modification made in accordance with this subsection.

“(e) Before submitting any written plan under subsection (a) (or modification under subsection (d)) to the Office of Personnel Management, the Administrator shall—

“(1) provide to each employee representative representing any employees who might be affected by such plan (or modification) a copy of the proposed plan (or modification);

“(2) give each representative 30 calendar days (unless extraordinary circumstances require earlier action) to review and make recommendations with respect to the proposed plan (or modification); and

“(3) give any recommendations received from any such representatives under paragraph (2) full and fair consideration in deciding whether or how to proceed with respect to the proposed plan (or modification).

“(f) None of the workforce authorities made available under this chapter may be exercised in a manner inconsistent with the workforce plan.

“(g) Whenever the Administration submits its performance plan under section 1115 of title 31 to the Office of Management and Budget for any year, the Administration shall at the same time submit a copy of such plan to the appropriate committees of Congress.

“(h) Not later than 6 years after the date of enactment of this chapter, the Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress an evaluation and analysis of the actions taken by the Administration under this chapter, including—

“(1) an evaluation, using the methods described in subsection (b)(7), of whether the authorities exercised under this chapter successfully addressed each critical need identified under subsection (b)(1);

“(2) to the extent that they did not, an explanation of the reasons why any critical need (apart from the ones under subsection (b)(3)) was not successfully addressed; and

“(3) recommendations for how the Administration could address any remaining critical need and could prevent those that have been addressed from recurring.

“(i) The budget request for the Administration for the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this chapter and for each fiscal year thereafter shall include a statement of the total amount of appropriations requested for such fiscal year to carry out this chapter.

“§ 9803. Restrictions

“(a) None of the workforce authorities made available under this chapter may be exercised with respect to any officer who is appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

“(b) Unless specifically stated otherwise, all workforce authorities made available under this chapter shall be subject to section 5307.

“(c)(1) None of the workforce authorities made available under section 9804, 9805, 9806, 9807, 9809, 9812, 9813, 9814, or 9815 may be exercised with respect to a political appointee.

“(2) For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘political appointee’ means an employee who holds—

“(A) a position which has been excepted from the competitive service by reason of its confidential, policy-determining, policy-making, or policy-advocating character; or

“(B) a position in the Senior Executive Service as a non-career appointee (as such term is defined in section 3132(a)).

“§ 9804. Recruitment, redesignation, and relocation bonuses

“(a) Notwithstanding section 5753, the Administrator may pay a bonus to an individual, in accordance with the workforce plan and subject to the limitations in this section, if—

“(1) the Administrator determines that the Administration would be likely, in the absence of a bonus, to encounter difficulty in filling a position; and

“(2) the individual—

“(A) is newly appointed as an employee of the Federal Government;

“(B) is currently employed by the Federal Government and is newly appointed to another position in the same geographic area; or

“(C) is currently employed by the Federal Government and is required to relocate to a different geographic area to accept a position with the Administration.

“(b) If the position is described as addressing a critical need in the workforce plan under section 9802(b)(2)(A), the amount of a bonus may not exceed—

“(1) 50 percent of the employee’s annual rate of basic pay (including comparability payments under sections 5304 and 5304a) as of the beginning of the service period multiplied by the service period specified under subsection (d)(1)(B)(i); or

“(2) 100 percent of the employee’s annual rate of basic pay (including comparability payments under sections 5304 and 5304a) as of the beginning of the service period.

“(c) If the position is not described as addressing a critical need in the workforce plan under section 9802(b)(2)(A), the amount of a bonus may not exceed 25 percent of the employee’s annual rate of basic pay (excluding comparability payments under sections 5304 and 5304a) as of the beginning of the service period.

“(d)(1)(A) Payment of a bonus under this section shall be contingent upon the individual entering into a service agreement with the Administration.

“(B) At a minimum, the service agreement shall include—

“(i) the required service period;

“(ii) the method of payment, including a payment schedule, which may include a lump-sum payment, installment payments, or a combination thereof;

“(iii) the amount of the bonus and the basis for calculating that amount; and

“(iv) the conditions under which the agreement may be terminated before the agreed-upon service period has been completed, and the effect of the termination.

“(2) For purposes of determinations under subsections (b)(1) and (c)(1), the employee’s service period shall be expressed as the number equal to the full years and twelfth parts thereof, rounding the fractional part of a month to the nearest twelfth part of a year. The service period may not be less than 6 months and may not exceed 4 years.

“(3) A bonus under this section may not be considered to be part of the basic pay of an employee.

“(e) Before paying a bonus under this section, the Administration shall establish a plan for paying recruitment, redesignation, and relocation bonuses, subject to approval by the Office of Personnel Management.

“(f) No more than 25 percent of the total amount in bonuses awarded under subsection (a) in any year may be awarded to supervisors or management officials.

“§ 9805. Retention bonuses

“(a) Notwithstanding section 5754, the Administrator may pay a bonus to an employee, in accordance with the workforce plan and subject to the limitations in this section, if the Administrator determines that—

“(1) the unusually high or unique qualifications of the employee or a special need of the Administration for the employee’s services makes it essential to retain the employee; and

“(2) the employee would be likely to leave in the absence of a retention bonus.

“(b) If the position is described as addressing a critical need in the workforce plan under section 9802(b)(2)(A), the amount of a bonus may not exceed 50 percent of the employee’s annual rate of basic pay (including comparability payments under sections 5304 and 5304a).

“(c) If the position is not described as addressing a critical need in the workforce plan under section 9802(b)(2)(A), the amount of a bonus may not exceed 25 percent of the employee’s annual rate of basic pay (excluding comparability payments under sections 5304 and 5304a).

“(d)(1)(A) Payment of a bonus under this section shall be contingent upon the employee entering into a service agreement with the Administration.

“(B) At a minimum, the service agreement shall include—

“(i) the required service period;

“(ii) the method of payment, including a payment schedule, which may include a lump-sum payment, installment payments, or a combination thereof;

“(iii) the amount of the bonus and the basis for calculating the amount; and

“(iv) the conditions under which the agreement may be terminated before the agreed-upon service period has been completed, and the effect of the termination.

“(2) The employee’s service period shall be expressed as the number equal to the full years and twelfth parts thereof, rounding the fractional part of a month to the nearest twelfth part of a year. The service period may not be less than 6 months and may not exceed 4 years.

“(3) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), a service agreement is not required if the Administration pays a bonus in biweekly installments and sets the installment payment at the full bonus percentage rate established for the employee, with no portion of the bonus deferred. In this case, the Administration shall inform the employee in writing of any decision to change the retention bonus payments. The employee shall continue to accrue entitlement to the retention bonus through the end of the pay period in which such written notice is provided.

“(e) A bonus under this section may not be considered to be part of the basic pay of an employee.

“(f) An employee is not entitled to a retention bonus under this section during a service period previously established for that employee under section 5753 or under section 9804.

“(g) No more than 25 percent of the total amount in bonuses awarded under subsection (a) in any year may be awarded to supervisors or management officials.

“§ 9806. Term appointments

“(a) The Administrator may authorize term appointments within the Administration under subchapter I of chapter 33, for a period of not less than 1 year and not more than 6 years.

“(b) Notwithstanding chapter 33 or any other provision of law relating to the examination, certification, and appointment of individuals in the competitive service, the Administrator may convert an employee serving under a term appointment to a permanent

appointment in the competitive service within the Administration without further competition if—

“(1) such individual was appointed under open, competitive examination under subchapter I of chapter 33 to the term position;

“(2) the announcement for the term appointment from which the conversion is made stated that there was potential for subsequent conversion to a career-conditional or career appointment;

“(3) the employee has completed at least 2 years of current continuous service under a term appointment in the competitive service;

“(4) the employee’s performance under such term appointment was at least fully successful or equivalent; and

“(5) the position to which such employee is being converted under this section is in the same occupational series, is in the same geographic location, and provides no greater promotion potential than the term position for which the competitive examination was conducted.

“(c) Notwithstanding chapter 33 or any other provision of law relating to the examination, certification, and appointment of individuals in the competitive service, the Administrator may convert an employee serving under a term appointment to a permanent appointment in the competitive service within the Administration through internal competitive promotion procedures if the conditions under paragraphs (1) through (4) of subsection (b) are met.

“(d) An employee converted under this section becomes a career-conditional employee, unless the employee has otherwise completed the service requirements for career tenure.

“(e) An employee converted to career or career-conditional employment under this section acquires competitive status upon conversion.

“§ 9807. Pay authority for critical positions

“(a) In this section, the term ‘position’ means—

“(1) a position to which chapter 51 applies, including a position in the Senior Executive Service;

“(2) a position under the Executive Schedule under sections 5312 through 5317;

“(3) a position established under section 3104; or

“(4) a senior-level position to which section 5376(a)(1) applies.

“(b) Authority under this section—

“(1) may be exercised only with respect to a position that—

“(A) is described as addressing a critical need in the workforce plan under section 9802(b)(2)(A); and

“(B) requires expertise of an extremely high level in a scientific, technical, professional, or administrative field;

“(2) may be exercised only to the extent necessary to recruit or retain an individual exceptionally well qualified for the position; and

“(3) may be exercised only in retaining employees of the Administration or in appointing individuals who were not employees of another Federal agency as defined under section 5102(a)(1).

“(c)(1) Notwithstanding section 5377, the Administrator may fix the rate of basic pay for a position in the Administration in

accordance with this section. The Administrator may not delegate this authority.

“(2) The number of positions with pay fixed under this section may not exceed 10 at any time.

“(d)(1) The rate of basic pay fixed under this section may not be less than the rate of basic pay (including any comparability payments) which would otherwise be payable for the position involved if this section had never been enacted.

“(2) The annual rate of basic pay fixed under this section may not exceed the per annum rate of salary payable under section 104 of title 3.

“(3) Notwithstanding any provision of section 5307, in the case of an employee who, during any calendar year, is receiving pay at a rate fixed under this section, no allowance, differential, bonus, award, or similar cash payment may be paid to such employee if, or to the extent that, when added to basic pay paid or payable to such employee (for service performed in such calendar year as an employee in the executive branch or as an employee outside the executive branch to whom chapter 51 applies), such payment would cause the total to exceed the per annum rate of salary which, as of the end of such calendar year, is payable under section 104 of title 3.

“§ 9808. Assignments of intergovernmental personnel

“For purposes of applying the third sentence of section 3372(a) (relating to the authority of the head of a Federal agency to extend the period of an employee’s assignment to or from a State or local government, institution of higher education, or other organization), the Administrator may, with the concurrence of the employee and the government or organization concerned, take any action which would be allowable if such sentence had been amended by striking ‘two’ and inserting ‘four’.

“§ 9809. Science and technology scholarship program

“(a)(1) The Administrator shall establish a National Aeronautics and Space Administration Science and Technology Scholarship Program to award scholarships to individuals that is designed to recruit and prepare students for careers in the Administration.

“(2) Individuals shall be selected to receive scholarships under this section through a competitive process primarily on the basis of academic merit, with consideration given to financial need and the goal of promoting the participation of individuals identified in section 33 or 34 of the Science and Engineering Equal Opportunities Act.

“(3) To carry out the Program the Administrator shall enter into contractual agreements with individuals selected under paragraph (2) under which the individuals agree to serve as full-time employees of the Administration, for the period described in subsection (f)(1), in positions needed by the Administration and for which the individuals are qualified, in exchange for receiving a scholarship.

“(b) In order to be eligible to participate in the Program, an individual must—

“(1) be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a full-time student at an institution of higher education in an academic field or discipline described in the list made available under subsection (d);

“(2) be a United States citizen or permanent resident; and

“(3) at the time of the initial scholarship award, not be an employee (as defined in section 2105).

“(c) An individual seeking a scholarship under this section shall submit an application to the Administrator at such time, in such manner, and containing such information, agreements, or assurances as the Administrator may require.

“(d) The Administrator shall make publicly available a list of academic programs and fields of study for which scholarships under the Program may be utilized and shall update the list as necessary.

Public
information.
Records.

“(e)(1) The Administrator may provide a scholarship under the Program for an academic year if the individual applying for the scholarship has submitted to the Administrator, as part of the application required under subsection (c), a proposed academic program leading to a degree in a program or field of study on the list made available under subsection (d).

“(2) An individual may not receive a scholarship under this section for more than 4 academic years, unless the Administrator grants a waiver.

“(3) The dollar amount of a scholarship under this section for an academic year shall be determined under regulations issued by the Administrator, but shall in no case exceed the cost of attendance.

“(4) A scholarship provided under this section may be expended for tuition, fees, and other authorized expenses as established by the Administrator by regulation.

“(5) The Administrator may enter into a contractual agreement with an institution of higher education under which the amounts provided for a scholarship under this section for tuition, fees, and other authorized expenses are paid directly to the institution with respect to which the scholarship is provided.

“(f)(1) The period of service for which an individual shall be obligated to serve as an employee of the Administration is, except as provided in subsection (h)(2), 24 months for each academic year for which a scholarship under this section is provided. Under no circumstances shall the total period of obligated service be more than 4 years.

“(2)(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B), obligated service under paragraph (1) shall begin not later than 60 days after the individual obtains the educational degree for which the scholarship was provided.

Deadline.

“(B) The Administrator may defer the obligation of an individual to provide a period of service under paragraph (1) if the Administrator determines that such a deferral is appropriate. The Administrator shall prescribe the terms and conditions under which a service obligation may be deferred through regulation.

Regulations.

“(g)(1) Scholarship recipients who fail to maintain a high level of academic standing, as defined by the Administrator by regulation, who are dismissed from their educational institutions for disciplinary reasons, or who voluntarily terminate academic training before graduation from the educational program for which the scholarship was awarded, shall be in breach of their contractual agreement and, in lieu of any service obligation arising under such agreement, shall be liable to the United States for repayment within 1 year after the date of default of all scholarship funds paid to them and to the institution of higher education on their behalf under

Regulations.

the agreement, except as provided in subsection (h)(2). The repayment period may be extended by the Administrator when determined to be necessary, as established by regulation.

“(2) Scholarship recipients who, for any reason, fail to begin or complete their service obligation after completion of academic training, or fail to comply with the terms and conditions of deferment established by the Administrator pursuant to subsection (f)(2)(B), shall be in breach of their contractual agreement. When recipients breach their agreements for the reasons stated in the preceding sentence, the recipient shall be liable to the United States for an amount equal to—

“(A) the total amount of scholarships received by such individual under this section; plus

“(B) the interest on the amounts of such awards which would be payable if at the time the awards were received they were loans bearing interest at the maximum legal prevailing rate, as determined by the Treasurer of the United States,

multiplied by 3.

“(h)(1) Any obligation of an individual incurred under the Program (or a contractual agreement thereunder) for service or payment shall be canceled upon the death of the individual.

Regulations.

“(2) The Administrator shall by regulation provide for the partial or total waiver or suspension of any obligation of service or payment incurred by an individual under the Program (or a contractual agreement thereunder) whenever compliance by the individual is impossible or would involve extreme hardship to the individual, or if enforcement of such obligation with respect to the individual would be contrary to the best interests of the Government.

“(i) For purposes of this section—

“(1) the term ‘cost of attendance’ has the meaning given that term in section 472 of the Higher Education Act of 1965;

“(2) the term ‘institution of higher education’ has the meaning given that term in section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965; and

“(3) the term ‘Program’ means the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Science and Technology Scholarship Program established under this section.

Appropriation
authorization.

“(j)(1) There is authorized to be appropriated to the Administration for the Program \$10,000,000 for each fiscal year.

“(2) Amounts appropriated under this section shall remain available for 2 fiscal years.

“§ 9810. Distinguished scholar appointment authority

“(a) In this section—

“(1) the term ‘professional position’ means a position that is classified to an occupational series identified by the Office of Personnel Management as a position that—

“(A) requires education and training in the principles, concepts, and theories of the occupation that typically can be gained only through completion of a specified curriculum at a recognized college or university; and

“(B) is covered by the Group Coverage Qualification Standard for Professional and Scientific Positions; and

“(2) the term ‘research position’ means a position in a professional series that primarily involves scientific inquiry or investigation, or research-type exploratory development of

a creative or scientific nature, where the knowledge required to perform the work successfully is acquired typically and primarily through graduate study.

“(b) The Administration may appoint, without regard to the provisions of section 3304(b) and sections 3309 through 3318, but subject to subsection (c), candidates directly to General Schedule professional, competitive service positions in the Administration for which public notice has been given (in accordance with regulations of the Office of Personnel Management), if—

“(1) with respect to a position at the GS-7 level, the individual—

“(A) received, within 2 years before the effective date of the appointment, from an accredited institution authorized to grant baccalaureate degrees, a baccalaureate degree in a field of study for which possession of that degree in conjunction with academic achievements meets the qualification standards as prescribed by the Office of Personnel Management for the position to which the individual is being appointed; and

“(B) achieved a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale and a grade point average of 3.5 or higher for courses in the field of study required to qualify for the position;

“(2) with respect to a position at the GS-9 level, the individual—

“(A) received, within 2 years before the effective date of the appointment, from an accredited institution authorized to grant graduate degrees, a graduate degree in a field of study for which possession of that degree meets the qualification standards at this grade level as prescribed by the Office of Personnel Management for the position to which the individual is being appointed; and

“(B) achieved a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale in graduate coursework in the field of study required for the position;

“(3) with respect to a position at the GS-11 level, the individual—

“(A) received, within 2 years before the effective date of the appointment, from an accredited institution authorized to grant graduate degrees, a graduate degree in a field of study for which possession of that degree meets the qualification standards at this grade level as prescribed by the Office of Personnel Management for the position to which the individual is being appointed; and

“(B) achieved a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale in graduate coursework in the field of study required for the position; or

“(4) with respect to a research position at the GS-12 level, the individual—

“(A) received, within 2 years before the effective date of the appointment, from an accredited institution authorized to grant graduate degrees, a graduate degree in a field of study for which possession of that degree meets the qualification standards at this grade level as prescribed by the Office of Personnel Management for the position to which the individual is being appointed; and

“(B) achieved a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale in graduate coursework in the field of study required for the position.

“(c) In making any selections under this section, preference eligibles who meet the criteria for distinguished scholar appointments shall be considered ahead of nonpreference eligibles.

“(d) An appointment made under this authority shall be a career-conditional appointment in the competitive civil service.

“§ 9811. Travel and transportation expenses of certain new appointees

“(a) In this section, the term ‘new appointee’ means—

“(1) a person newly appointed or reinstated to Federal service to the Administration to—

“(A) a career or career-conditional appointment or an excepted service appointment to a continuing position;

“(B) a term appointment;

“(C) an excepted service appointment that provides for noncompetitive conversion to a career or career-conditional appointment;

“(D) a career or limited term Senior Executive Service appointment;

“(E) an appointment made under section 203(c)(2)(A) of the National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958 (42 U.S.C. 2473(c)(2)(A));

“(F) an appointment to a position established under section 3104; or

“(G) an appointment to a position established under section 5108; or

“(2) a student trainee who, upon completion of academic work, is converted to an appointment in the Administration that is identified in paragraph (1) in accordance with an appropriate authority.

“(b) The Administrator may pay the travel, transportation, and relocation expenses of a new appointee to the same extent, in the same manner, and subject to the same conditions as the payment of such expenses under sections 5724, 5724a, 5724b, and 5724c to an employee transferred in the interests of the United States Government.

“§ 9812. Annual leave enhancements

“(a) In this section—

“(1) the term ‘newly appointed employee’ means an individual who is first appointed—

“(A) as an employee of the Federal Government; or

“(B) as an employee of the Federal Government following a break in service of at least 90 days after that individual’s last period of Federal employment, other than—

“(i) employment under the Student Educational Employment Program administered by the Office of Personnel Management;

“(ii) employment as a law clerk trainee;

“(iii) employment under a short-term temporary appointing authority while a student during periods of vacation from the educational institution at which the student is enrolled;

“(iv) employment under a provisional appointment if the new appointment is permanent and immediately follows the provisional appointment; or

“(v) employment under a temporary appointment that is neither full-time nor the principal employment of the individual;

“(2) the term ‘period of qualified non-Federal service’ means any period of service performed by an individual that—

“(A) was performed in a position the duties of which were directly related to the duties of the position in the Administration which that individual will fill as a newly appointed employee; and

“(B) except for this section, would not otherwise be service performed by an employee for purposes of section 6303; and

“(3) the term ‘directly related to the duties of the position’ means duties and responsibilities in the same line of work which require similar qualifications.

“(b)(1) For purposes of section 6303, the Administrator may deem a period of qualified non-Federal service performed by a newly appointed employee to be a period of service of equal length performed as an employee.

“(2) A decision under paragraph (1) to treat a period of qualified non-Federal service as if it were service performed as an employee shall continue to apply so long as that individual serves in or under the Administration.

“(c)(1) Notwithstanding section 6303(a), the annual leave accrual rate for an employee of the Administration in a position paid under section 5376 or 5383, or for an employee in an equivalent category whose rate of basic pay is greater than the rate payable at GS-15, step 10, shall be 1 day for each full biweekly pay period.

“(2) The accrual rate established under this subsection shall continue to apply to the employee so long as such employee serves in or under the Administration.

“§ 9813. Limited appointments to Senior Executive Service positions

“(a) In this section—

“(1) the term ‘career reserved position’ means a position in the Administration designated under section 3132(b) which may be filled only by—

“(A) a career appointee; or

“(B) a limited emergency appointee or a limited term appointee—

“(i) who, immediately before entering the career reserved position, was serving under a career or career-conditional appointment outside the Senior Executive Service; or

“(ii) whose limited emergency or limited term appointment is approved in advance by the Office of Personnel Management;

“(2) the term ‘limited emergency appointee’ has the meaning given under section 3132; and

“(3) the term ‘limited term appointee’ means an individual appointed to a Senior Executive Service position in the Administration to meet a bona fide temporary need, as determined by the Administrator.

“(b) The number of career reserved positions which are filled by an appointee as described under subsection (a)(1)(B) may not exceed 10 percent of the total number of Senior Executive Service positions allocated to the Administration.

“(c) Notwithstanding sections 3132 and 3394(b)—

“(1) the Administrator may appoint an individual to any Senior Executive Service position in the Administration as a limited term appointee under this section for a period of—

“(A) 4 years or less to a position the duties of which will expire at the end of such term; or

“(B) 1 year or less to a position the duties of which are continuing; and

“(2) in rare circumstances, the Administrator may authorize an extension of a limited appointment under—

“(A) paragraph (1)(A) for a period not to exceed 2 years; and

“(B) paragraph (1)(B) for a period not to exceed 1 year.

“(d) A limited term appointee who has been appointed in the Administration from a career or career-conditional appointment outside the Senior Executive Service shall have reemployment rights in the agency from which appointed, or in another agency, under requirements and conditions established by the Office of Personnel Management. The Office shall have the authority to direct such placement in any agency.

“(e) Notwithstanding section 3394(b) and section 3395—

“(1) a limited term appointee serving under a term prescribed under this section may be reassigned to another Senior Executive Service position in the Administration, the duties of which will expire at the end of a term of 4 years or less; and

“(2) a limited term appointee serving under a term prescribed under this section may be reassigned to another continuing Senior Executive Service position in the Administration, except that the appointee may not serve in 1 or more positions in the Administration under such appointment in excess of 1 year, except that in rare circumstances, the Administrator may approve an extension up to an additional 1 year.

“(f) A limited term appointee may not serve more than 7 consecutive years under any combination of limited appointments.

“(g) Notwithstanding section 5384, the Administrator may authorize performance awards to limited term appointees in the Administration in the same amounts and in the same manner as career appointees.

“§ 9814. Qualifications pay

“(a) Notwithstanding section 5334, the Administrator may set the pay of an employee paid under the General Schedule at any step within the pay range for the grade of the position, if such employee—

“(1) possesses unusually high or unique qualifications; and

“(2) is assigned—

“(A) new duties, without a change of position; or

“(B) to a new position.

“(b) If an exercise of the authority under this section relates to a current employee selected for another position within the Administration, a determination shall be made that the employee's

contribution in the new position will exceed that in the former position, before setting pay under this section.

“(c) Pay as set under this section is basic pay for such purposes as pay set under section 5334.

“(d) If the employee serves for at least 1 year in the position for which the pay determination under this section was made, or a successor position, the pay earned under such position may be used in succeeding actions to set pay under chapter 53.

“(e) Before setting any employee’s pay under this section, the Administrator shall submit a plan to the Office of Personnel Management and the appropriate committees of Congress, that includes—

“(1) criteria for approval of actions to set pay under this section;

“(2) the level of approval required to set pay under this section;

“(3) all types of actions and positions to be covered;

“(4) the relationship between the exercise of authority under this section and the use of other pay incentives; and

“(5) a process to evaluate the effectiveness of this section.

“§ 9815. Reporting requirement

“The Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress, not later than February 28 of each of the next 6 years beginning after the date of enactment of this chapter, a report that provides the following: Deadline.

“(1) A summary of all bonuses paid under subsections (b) and (c) of section 9804 during the preceding fiscal year. Such summary shall include the total amount of bonuses paid, the total number of bonuses paid, the percentage of the amount of bonuses awarded to supervisors and management officials, and the average percentage used to calculate the total average bonus amount, under each of those subsections.

“(2) A summary of all bonuses paid under subsections (b) and (c) of section 9805 during the preceding fiscal year. Such summary shall include the total amount of bonuses paid, the total number of bonuses paid, the percentage of the amount of bonuses awarded to supervisors and management officials, and the average percentage used to calculate the total average bonus amount, under each of those subsections.

“(3) The total number of term appointments converted during the preceding fiscal year under section 9806 and, of that total number, the number of conversions that were made to address a critical need described in the workforce plan pursuant to section 9802(b)(2).

“(4) The number of positions for which the rate of basic pay was fixed under section 9807 during the preceding fiscal year, the number of positions for which the rate of basic pay under such section was terminated during the preceding fiscal year, and the number of times the rate of basic pay was fixed under such section to address a critical need described in the workforce plan pursuant to section 9802(b)(2).

“(5) The number of scholarships awarded under section 9809 during the preceding fiscal year and the number of scholarship recipients appointed by the Administration during the preceding fiscal year.

“(6) The total number of distinguished scholar appointments made under section 9810 during the preceding fiscal year and, of that total number, the number of appointments that were made to address a critical need described in the workforce plan pursuant to section 9802(b)(2).

“(7) The average amount paid per appointee, and the largest amount paid to any appointee, under section 9811 during the preceding fiscal year for travel and transportation expenses.

“(8) The total number of employees who were awarded enhanced annual leave under section 9812 during the preceding fiscal year; of that total number, the number of employees who were serving in a position addressing a critical need described in the workforce plan pursuant to section 9802(b)(2); and, for employees in each of those respective groups, the average amount of additional annual leave such employees earned in the preceding fiscal year (over and above what they would have earned absent section 9812).

“(9) The total number of appointments made under section 9813 during the preceding fiscal year and, of that total number, the number of appointments that were made to address a critical need described in the workforce plan pursuant to section 9802(b)(2).

“(10) The number of employees for whom the Administrator set the pay under section 9814 during the preceding fiscal year and the number of times pay was set under such section to address a critical need described in the workforce plan pursuant to section 9802(b)(2).

“(11) A summary of all recruitment, relocation, redesignation, and retention bonuses paid under authorities other than this chapter and excluding the authorities provided in sections 5753 and 5754 of this title, during the preceding fiscal year. Such summary shall include, for each type of bonus, the total amount of bonuses paid, the total number of bonuses paid, the percentage of the amount of bonuses awarded to supervisors and management officials, and the average percentage used to calculate the total average bonus amount.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of chapters for part III of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to chapter 97 the following:

“98. National Aeronautics and Space Administration 9801”.

Approved February 24, 2004.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S. 610 (H.R. 1085):

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 108–244, Pt. 1 accompanying H.R. 1085 (Comm. on Science).

SENATE REPORTS: No. 108–113 (Comm. on Governmental Affairs).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

Vol. 149 (2003): Nov. 24, considered and passed Senate.

Vol. 150 (2004): Jan. 28, considered and passed House.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS, Vol. 40 (2004):

Feb. 24, Presidential statement.

