

July 30, 2013

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the over 200,000 managers and supervisors in the federal government whose interests are represented by the Federal Managers Association (FMA), I am writing to express deep concerns with several pieces of legislation before the House that target the federal workforce. The Citizens Empowerment Act, H.R. 2711; the Government Spending Accountability Act, H.R. 313; the Stop Targeting Our Politics (STOP) IRS Act, H.R. 2565; the Common Sense in Compensation Act, H.R. 1541; and, the Stop Playing on Citizen's Cash Act, H.R. 2769, instill a sense of distrust of the federal government and undermine the congressionally mandated mission and goals of federal departments and agencies. FMA understands the importance of transparency and accountability within the federal government, however, these bills are little more than a knee jerk reaction to stories in the news and negatively affect the efficiency and effectiveness of the federal government.

The Citizen Empowerment Act, H.R. 2711, as introduced by Representative Lynn Jenkins (R- KS), authorizes every official interaction with an executive branch employee, either by phone or in person, to be recorded by the other party. No exceptions are provided, nor is there any requirement to notify a federal employee that he or she is being tape recorded. FMA is concerned with the privacy issues this raises, as well as the potential to undermine law enforcement-related investigations.

The Government Spending Accountability Act, H.R. 313, imposes across-the-board cuts for spending on conferences and calls for greater transparency on spending and participation. Federal employees rely on conferences for training and certification to better understand best practices for their jobs, learn new technology to improve duty fulfillment, and improve the federal workforce. Conference spending should be based on a case-by-case basis to ensure taxpayer money is well spent. Additionally, the Stop Playing on Citizen's Cash Act, H.R. 2769, reduces the educational and professional worth of conferences for training and certification for IRS employees.

The Stop Targeting Our Politics (STOP) IRS Act, H.R. 2565, calls for the termination of IRS employees for use of their position within the agency for political and/or personal gain. However, Section 7323 of Title 5 of the U.S. Code restricts political activity by federal employees and 5 USC 2301(b)(8) prohibits employees from using their official authority for the purpose of interfering with or affecting an election. In addition, 5 CFR 2635.702 prohibits the use of public office for private gain. H.R. 2565 is unnecessary and seeks to unfairly target IRS employees.

The Common Sense in Compensation Act, H.R. 1541, caps monetary awards at five percent through fiscal year 2015. This limits merit based performance awards and takes away one of the few incentives left for federal employees to go above and beyond their regular duties to serve the American public. There already is a morale problem with the federal government with only four out of ten federal employees believing they will be rewarded for good work, and H.R. 1541 only adds to the problem.

Federal employees take great pride in their work. They administer invaluable services to American citizens. While they have been demonized recently in the press they are dedicated patriots willing to do whatever it takes to fulfill their duties. Treating the federal workforce as a scapegoat for the country's woes is not a solution. I urge you to support the men and women within the federal government and oppose legislation that vilifies the federal workforce. Thank you for your time and consideration of our views. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact FMA's Government Affairs Director Greg Stanford at gstanford@fedmanagers.org or 703-683-8700, ext. 104.

Sincerely yours,



Patricia J. Niehaus
National President