

MEMORANDUM

To: FMA Regional Directors

From: Greg Stanford and Katie Maddocks

Re: FMA Government Affairs Update for September 2014

Date: October 6, 2014

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a brief narrative and status of ongoing government relations and public affairs activities the FMA government relations department worked on in September 2014 on behalf of FMA members. Please share this information with chapter presidents, legislative action team leaders and others in your region.

Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act passes House Committee

On Wednesday, September 17, the House Oversight Government Reform Committee voted unanimously to pass FMA's Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act (H.R. 5229). As noted in the last update, Representative Stephen Lynch (D-MA) introduced this bipartisan legislation, which FMA brought to his office. The issue was first raised by FMA Chapter 21 Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Station. During the hearing, Representative John Mica (R-FL) said H.R. 5229 is a "small bill that will make a big difference." FMA is currently working with members of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee and other Senators to draft a companion bill in the upper chamber of Congress.

GMC Hill Day

The Government Managers Coalition (GMC) made joint visits to Capitol Hill to support several issues our groups agree on, including managerial training, extension of the probationary period, and the Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act (H.R. 5229). Meetings included:

- OGR Subcommittee Chairman Blake Farenthold (R-TX)
- Office of Representative Derek Kilmer (D-WA)
- Office of Representative Jason Chaffetz (R-UT)
- HSGAC Chairman Tom Carper (D-DE)
- Office of Senator Jon Cornyn (R-TX)
- HSGAC Subcommittee Chairman Jon Tester (D-MT)

National President Visits to Washington, D.C.

President Niehaus had several productive visits to Washington, D.C., September 15-22. The government affairs department assisted FMA Executive Director Todd Wells in preparing her itinerary, which included a variety of meetings with both the legislative and administrative branches:

- **Merit Systems Protection Board** – President Niehaus was invited to present at the MSPB’s Sunshine Act meeting regarding MSPB’s Office of Policy and Evaluation proposed research topics for 2015-2018. Other invited presenters included representatives from IFPTE, AFGE, SEA, BIG, FEW, the Government Accountability Project, NAPA, and the Partnership for Public Service.
- **Office of Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-UT)** – Discussed FMA priorities including managerial training, extending the probationary period, and the Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act.
- **Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on the Efficiency and Effectiveness and of Federal Programs and the Federal Workforce** – Discussed managerial training, extending the probationary period, and the Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act. Senator Tester, chairman of the subcommittee, is preparing to introduce companion legislation to H.R. 5229 in the Senate.
- **Office of Senator Susan Collins (R-ME)** – Discussed re-employed annuitants, the Enhanced Security Clearance Act, FECA reform, and the Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act
- **Office of Rep. Rob Wittman (R-VA)** – Discussed the Federal Employee Combat Zone Tax Parity Act, managerial training, and extending the probationary period.
- **Federal Times – Andy Medici and Steve Watkins Lunch with Steve Watkins (Editor) and Andy Medici (Beat Writer)** – Discussed a wide variety of issues and ways FMA can work together with Federal Times. The publication recently invited President Niehaus to compose a regular blog to discuss management issues.
- **Federal Reserve** -- Meeting with Don Hammond, Chief Operating Officer, Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System and Michell Clark, Director, Management Division, to discuss ways FMA and the Federal Reserve can work together.
- **Representative Chris Van Hollen (D-MD)** – Discussed the potential for reintroducing legislation providing for FEHB premium conversion for retirees again, and the Wounded Warrior Federal Leave Act.
- **National Council on Federal Labor-Management Relations** -- The National Council on Federal Labor-Management Relations met on September 17. The next Council meeting will be held on November 19.
- **Sammies** – On September 22, President Niehaus and Executive Director Todd Wells attended the 13th Annual Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medals.

NASA Site Visit

On Thursday, September 11, Greg joined other members of OPM’s employee engagement workgroup for a site visit to the National Aviation and Space Administration (NASA) National Headquarters to

gather best practices regarding building a solid institutional culture. NASA consistently ranks as one of the “Best Places to Work” in the federal government.

Fundraisers

With the November elections approaching quickly, the government affairs department attended many fundraisers in September. National President Niehaus and Executive Director Wells attended fundraisers, as well. FMA attended events on behalf of:

- Senator Susan Collins (R-ME)
- Representative Tulsi Gabbard (D-HI)
- Representative Stephen Lynch (D-MA)
- Representative Elijah Cummings (D-MD)
- Representative Blake Farenthold (R-TX)
- Representative John Garamendi (D-CA)
- Representative Rick Larsen (D-WA)
- Representative Sandy Levin (D-MI)
- Senator Mark Pryor (D-AR)
- Representative Wm. Lacy Clay (D-MO)
- Representative Xavier Becerra (D-CA)

Region 2 Conference

On Saturday, September 6, Greg attended the 2014 Region 2 Conference and presented a government affairs report, giving an update on FMA’s issues, including combat zone pay parity, succession planning within agencies, and the overall status of the federal government. He also touched upon the importance of FMA members’ involvement in government affairs in order to ensure the success of the Association on Capitol Hill.

Federal News Radio

Both Greg and Katie represented FMA on the In Depth with Francis Rose program on Federal News Radio in September.