

December 10, 2012

The Honorable Buck McKeon
Chairman
House Armed Services Committee
2184 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515

The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member
House Armed Services Committee
2402 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515

Dear Chairman McKeon and Ranking Member Smith:

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 respectfully ask that you reject the provision in the Senate-passed version of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), Section 341, which makes large, arbitrary cuts to Defense civilian jobs.

The changing nature of warfare, increased use of unmanned vehicles and precision weapons dramatically changes the requirements of our armed forces. As the drawdown in the Middle East moves forward and we continue to look for budget savings, personnel levels within the Department of Defense (DOD), including troops, contractors and civilians, need to be evaluated and recalibrated. The DOD recognizes the need for America to adapt and respond to the realities of warfare in the 21st century and necessary budget cuts, while maintaining the strongest and most capable military force in the history of the world.

As difficult and necessary decisions regarding personnel are made, it is incumbent on decision makers to ensure that the federal civilian workforce is sufficiently sized. It is essential that any personnel reductions are made with respect to the workload and needs of the mission. Arbitrary, across-the-board cuts of federal civilian personnel may achieve savings, but would have broad, unintended consequences jeopardizing critical missions.

The Pentagon has plans in place to reduce the civilian workforce, which has already contributed billions to deficit reduction through the pay freeze. And federal managers within DOD are already bracing for expected additional significant cuts as our nation's leaders make decisions concerning the fiscal cliff.

The House-passed version of the NDAA did not include comparable language to the Senate provision. As you consider the differing bills in conference, I ask that you recognize the need to give the Secretary of Defense and DOD the flexibility they need to provide adequate civilian staffing and insist on the House-approved bill without Section 341. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact FMA's Government Affairs Director Greg Stanford at gstanford@fedmanagers.org or (703) 683-8700. Thank you for your time and consideration of our views.

Sincerely,



Patricia J. Niehaus
National President