

July 1, 2014

The Honorable Rob Wittman  
2454 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Wittman:

On behalf of the over 200,000 managers and supervisors currently serving our nation in the federal government and whose interests are represented by the Federal Managers Association (FMA), we extend our full support of your bill, the Federal Employee Combat Zone Tax Parity Act, H.R. 4621, as it strives to create equal pay among federal workers, contractors, and military personnel working within a combat zone. Currently, military personnel and federal contractors serving in combat zones such as Afghanistan receive tax exemptions on their base pay. Civilian employees do not receive any kind of tax benefit while serving in combat zones. Rather, they are sometimes provided “post differential” and “danger” pay, but this is not guaranteed.

Federal workers recite the same oath as military personnel when they enter office, and over 100,000 civilian employees have served in Afghanistan and Iraq, supporting economic and political development, reconstruction projects, and military missions. While FMA applauds and agrees with the policy for military personnel, it is important to create parity for federal civilian employees so they are eligible for these tax exemptions when serving in a danger zone. Reports have stated that approximately 5,000 civilians are working in combat zones around the world at any given time. Thousands of them are serving alongside members of the Armed Forces as firefighters, depot maintenance and repair workers, and in other support positions on the ground in dangerous and life threatening situations.

The government relies heavily on civil service volunteers who have specialized expertise in fields not found in the military to fill critical positions in combat zones. Federal agencies have difficulty staffing these volunteer posts and a tax exemption equalizing the treatment with the military provides an incentive to increase the number of civil service volunteers. By creating parity among those who serve in combat zones, there would be greater incentive for federal employees to volunteer to work alongside fellow military personnel and military contractors.

Thank you for your continued support of the men and women in the public sector. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact FMA’s Government Affairs Director Greg Stanford at [gstanford@fedmanagers.org](mailto:gstanford@fedmanagers.org) or (703) 683-8700.

Sincerely,



Patricia J. Niehaus  
National President