

December 14, 2015

The Honorable Kelly Ayotte  
144 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mazie Hirono  
330 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Angus King  
133 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen  
506 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell  
511 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tim Kaine  
231 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
154 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mark Warner  
475 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Ayotte, Cantwell, Hirono, Kaine, King, Murray, Shaheen, and Warner:

On behalf of the managers and supervisors currently serving our nation in the federal government and whose interests are represented by the Federal Managers Association (FMA), I would like to ask for your support of civilian employees who face cuts to temporary duty assignment (TDY) per diem allowances as implemented by the Department of Defense (DOD). The majority of FMA's members are civilian employees within the nation's naval shipyards who often volunteer for TDY in order to ensure the missions and goals of DOD are met. Your colleagues, Senator Brian Schatz and Senator Susan Collins, who also represent civilian defense employees at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Portsmouth Naval Shipyard have already expressed their concern on this matter to the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Senate Appropriations Committee. As Senators who also represent our nation's shipyards, I ask that you join in their support of the dedicated civilian workforce.

As you know, in order to combat restrictive budgets, department leaders instituted drastic cuts to long-term TDY on November 1, 2014. Civilian defense employees on TDY between 30 and 180 days saw a reduction by 25 percent, while those over 180 days face a 45 percent reduction. These extreme cuts put undue financial burdens on these dedicated employees who struggle to meet these per diem requirements or are forced to make up any cost differences out of their own pockets due to the fact that these new rates will price them out of markets. Hotel industry representatives commented they currently face 80 percent capacity; they do not need the business of the federal government. Additionally, TDY service is voluntary. FMA is already seeing its members reluctant to serve TDY as they already have mortgages, car payments, and child care costs at home. An FMA member based out of Naval Undersea Warfare Center, Division Keyport commented, "It has always been difficult to find people at the senior grade levels required willing to disrupt their family life for these kinds of assignments. The new rule on 55 percent per diem has made it even more difficult to find senior people willing to go." A reduction of

travel payments for employees on official travel needs to be fully funded to prevent having to take funds from personal accounts to cover expenses and waiting to be reimbursed at some later time by the government

FMA was pleased to see that the House fiscal year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act included a repeal of these drastic cuts. We applaud the members of the House Armed Services Committee who recognize how detrimental these cuts are to DOD's missions and goals. While this language was not included in the Senate version of the bill, as Members of Congress move forward on current spending levels, it is FMA's hope that TDY per diem allowances will be restored.

Thank you for your continued support and leadership on this matter. Federal workers are still trying to financially recover from the three year pay freeze; furloughs caused by sequestration; and, a government shutdown. Civilian defense employees are dedicated men and women and should not shoulder the burden of departmental cost cutting. 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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Patricia J. Niehaus". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Patricia J. Niehaus  
National President