

## MEMORANDUM

**To: FMA Regional Directors**

**From: Greg Stanford and Katie Maddocks**

**Re: FMA Government Affairs Update for September 2013**

**Date: Wednesday, October 9, 2013**

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The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a brief narrative and status of ongoing government relations and public affairs activity items the FMA government relations department worked on in September 2013 on behalf of FMA members. Please feel free to share this memorandum with chapter presidents, legislative action team leaders and others in your region.

### **Continuing Resolution/Federal Government Shutdown/Sequester**

As the end of Fiscal Year 2013 approached, with no appropriations bills signed into law to fund the federal government, FMA dedicated its efforts to urging a balanced solution to the budget dispute.

1. In early September, when it appeared that Congress would consider a continuing resolution (CR) to fund the government through December 15, we sent a letter to every Member of Congress to detail the negative impact CRs have on managers and urging a return to regular order. This letter can be found on the FMA website.
2. In the days leading up to the end of FY2013, we sent another letter to every Member of Congress, urging swift action to prevent a shutdown. While a CR is not conducive to sustainable government, a government shutdown furloughs hundreds of thousands of federal workers and impedes the growth of the national economy.
3. We drafted an action letter for FMA members to directly contact their Representative and Senators, urging them to develop a spending measure and avoid a government shutdown.
4. FMA sent a letter to all Members of Congress in support of legislation (HR 3223 and S 1567) that would pay all federal employees retroactively for the duration of the shutdown.
5. We expressed FMA's budget related concerns to House and Senate staff in numerous phone conversations, in-person meetings, and emails. It is important that both chambers and both parties understand how an underfunded agency negatively impacts not only federal workers, but the country as a whole.
6. We worked with the Fed-Postal Coalition on coordinated messaging to amplify outreach and share concerns about the negative impacts of a shutdown with Congress, the Administration, and targeted media outlets. Joint letters from the FPC can be found on the FMA website.

7. We updated the FMA website and Facebook page with news of interest, including shutdown guidance provided by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM): <http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/furlough-guidance/#url=Shutdown-Furlough>. In addition, there is a section on the shutdown, including FMA action and department and agency guidance.
8. Katie attended a House Armed Services Committee hearing: "Planning for Sequestration in Fiscal Year 2014 and Perspectives of the Military Services on the Strategic Choices and Management Review." In addition to the government shutdown, sequestration will continue into FY14 unless legislation is drafted.
9. FMA will continue to compile information on sequestration and how it will affect feds throughout the country. A link is available on the front page of the FMA website.

#### Next Steps:

1. FMA will continue to urge a swift resolution to the government shutdown with congressional offices.
2. We will keep FMA members apprised of any developments and forward any useful information related to shutdown furloughs and procedures to members. Please look to the FMA website and Facebook for updated information. We further encourage you give FMA your non-government email address to ensure you receive all information from FMA without violating the Hatch Act.
3. We ask that FMA members who are willing to share their personal stories of furlough-related impacts write letters to the editors of their local newspapers and inform the national office if your letters or comments are used. Additionally, we are contacted regularly by local and national media to speak with FMA members on many issues affecting federal employees. If members are willing and able to speak with the press, please let Greg know. It is important to let Americans know that federal workers are hardworking taxpayers who contribute to their communities.

#### **FEHB Changes, the Affordable Care Act**

1. Katie attended a briefing at OPM on changes to the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) going into effect in 2014. FEHBP enrollees will contribute 4.4 percent more, while the government contributions will increase 3.3 percent. The average enrollee with Self Only coverage should expect to pay \$3.28 more every two weeks, while those under Self Plus Family will pay \$7.90 more. The 2013 Open Season will run from November 11 through December 9.
2. On Monday, September 30, Greg attended the FEHB Advisory Group meeting at OPM to discuss several issues related to the 2014 rates and the Federal Employees Benefits Survey, which is currently in the field. This group meets regularly to discuss FEHB issues and news.
3. Tom Grace, president of Chapter 208, shared that several members of his chapter asked about how the roll-out of the Affordable Care Act would affect their FEHB benefits. OPM sent us an



informational document, *How Does the Affordable Care Act's Individual Shared Responsibility Provision and the Requirement to Maintain Minimum Essential Coverage AFFECT ME?* That document is attached for your review.

### **Succession Planning**

Representative Elijah Cummings (D-MD), the ranking member of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, expressed interest in working with FMA on legislation requiring federal agencies to focus more on the critical issue of succession planning. Greg had several conversations with the minority staff leadership, and is working with FMA member Dr. Ray Marbury to develop documents requested by the committee staff.

### **Supervisor Training**

Representative Jim Moran (D-VA), who introduced a bill to strengthen mandatory supervisory training requirements in the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress, is planning to reintroduce legislation this fall. Greg and Katie met with Rep. Moran's staff and other congressional offices to support reintroduction and request additional cosponsors.

Retired Senator Daniel Akaka (D-HI) was the champion of this issue in the Senate, so we are currently working to identify a new champion. Greg and Katie met with Senate staff to brief them on this issue, and are planning to have joint meetings with colleagues from the Senior Executives Association and the Professional Managers Association in October.

### **Federal Prison Industries**

Greg and Katie met with congressional staff on the issue of mandatory sourcing from Federal Prison Industries. Current law requires federal agencies to purchase procurement goods from FPI when a contract is more than \$2,500. In July, an amendment offered to the House FY14 Defense Appropriations bill called for the repeal of the mandatory sourcing, but the amendment was not ruled in order.

### **Region Conferences**

Greg attended the FMA Region 2 conference in Williamsburg, VA, on Saturday, September 7.

Greg and Katie provided a government affairs presentation via SKYPE to the FMA Region 1 conference on Saturday, September 28.