

MEMORANDUM

To: FMA Regional Directors

From: Greg Stanford and Katie Maddocks

Re: FMA Government Affairs Update for December 2014

Date: January 9, 2015

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 December 2014 on behalf of FMA members. Please share this information with chapter presidents, legislative action team leaders and others in your region.

Wounded Warrior Legislation Introduced in the U.S. Senate

Shortly before the end of the 113th Congress, Senator Jon Tester (D-MT) introduced the Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act (S. 3001), which would provide 104 hours of sick leave up front to first year federal employees who qualify under the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) as thirty percent disabled due to a service-related injury. Senator Jerry Moran (R-KS) cosponsored this bipartisan legislation. This issue, originally raised by an FMA member at Chapter 21, Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, North Carolina, is a priority for the Association.

FMA conducted several meetings with Senator Tester's staff to educate them on the issue and build support, culminating with the introduction of S. 3001. The Senate action followed the efforts in the House of Representatives, where similar legislation (H.R. 5229) passed the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee in September 2014. While both bills will need to be reintroduced in both the House and the Senate in the 114th Congress, the bipartisan, bicameral support gives the issue great momentum, and FMA will continue the strong push to get this initiative enacted into law.

DOD Round Table on TDY Reductions

On December 4, Greg and Katie represented the Federal Managers Association (FMA) at a round table discussion with Department of Defense (DOD) Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense, Readiness and Force Management Stephanie Barna and DOD leadership to discuss cuts to temporary duty assignment (TDY) per diem allowances that went into effect on November 1, 2014. Representative Derek Kilmer (D-WA) convened the round table, which also included union, hotel and industry representatives. Representatives Sam Farr (D-CA) and Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) also participated, along with staffers from several other Members of Congress.

In a press release, FMA National President Patricia Niehaus commented, "FMA understands the directives DOD is under to reduce expenditures and other costs, and we are hopeful that this round



table is a pathway for a continuing dialog between the DOD workforce and DOD leadership to come to an understanding on the best methods for reducing spending within the Department, but not at the expense of its dedicated workers. These TDY per diem allowance cuts do not grasp the realities of long term travel expenses. FMA will continue to work with Members of Congress and DOD leadership to develop sound funding to ensure mission success while fairly compensating employees."

National President Patricia Niehaus Visit to DC

FMA National President Patricia Niehaus attended President Barack Obama's address to the Senior Executive Service (SES), where he announced a number of reforms to the program. Following the address, Niehaus was interviewed by Jason Miller of Federal News Radio. When asked about a program where potential managers will work in rotational assignments at different agencies and bring learned skills back to their home agencies, Niehaus said, "The opportunities that would present to lower-level managers to grow into the SES would just be invaluable . . . It's a career path that sometimes tops out for managers because they don't have that breadth of experience. To be able to give our managers that is just an invaluable tool. I think it will be great if they get it in place and get it working."

Following the address, Niehaus met with Kellie Lunney, a senior writer for *Government Executive*.

GMC Meeting with Archuleta

On December 17, Greg and FMA Executive Director Todd Wells represented the Association at a meeting with Office of Personnel Management Director Katherine Archuleta. It was a joint meeting with other members of the Government Managers Coalition (GMC), and we discussed issues the GMC is jointly committed to: providing the management perspective on issues affecting the federal workforce and promoting good government policies.

We had a productive conversation and collaboration on several of FMA's priorities, including training and development, reform of the probationary period, employee engagement initiatives, time and attendance issues related to managing telework, and the retirement backlog. Director Archuleta thanked all participants for their input and recommended that she meet quarterly with the GMC to hear the views of management.