



MEMORANDUM

To: FMA Regional Directors

From: Greg Stanford and Katie Maddocks

Re: FMA Government Affairs Update for April 2015

Date: May 8, 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 April 2015 on behalf of FMA members. Please share this information with chapter presidents, legislative action team leaders and others in your region.

Niehaus Blog for *Federal Times*

FMA National President Patricia Niehaus writes for a *Federal Times* blog on management issues. In April 2015, President Niehaus focused on several pieces of legislation introduced in the House of Representatives in the 114th Congress that target federal employees. The government affairs department is keeping a close eye on these bills and advocating actively against them on Capitol Hill.

Niehaus' piece, titled "What Congress doesn't get about the federal workforce," put a spotlight on stand-alone bills including a measure mandating an 8.7% pay cut for any federal employee making \$100,000 or more, legislation that would change the pension calculations from the current High Three to a High Five, an attrition bill that would reduce the federal workforce by 10 percent, and a bill that would reduce Department of Defense civilian personnel by 15 percent. She also touched several negative provisions of the House-passed Fiscal Year 2016 budget proposal, which called for a six percent increase to pension contributions for all feds. Her blog was well received and generated several conversations with House and Senate staffers, as well as media appearances with Federal News Radio. [You can read her blog post here.](#)

FMA Calls for a Fully-Funded Federal Workforce

The Federal Managers Association will periodically produce content for FEDmanager.com, a weekly e-report federal executives, managers and HR representatives. Past article topics from FMA included sequestration, employee engagement and morale, and succession planning with federal departments and agencies. In April 2015, FMA voiced its concerns on the current congressional budgetary plans for the federal workforce. At the end of March, both the House and Senate passed separate budgets that

called for hundreds of billions of dollars in cuts to the federal workforce, drastically impacting hard earned benefits and take home pay. In the article, FMA argues the budget plans would do nothing to promote a sustainable federal government that is capable of meeting the needs of the American public.

"The American public deserves a fully-capable, well-treated federal workforce to provide the much needed services across the country that our citizens count on. We need to sit down and have a frank and honest discussion of what we want and expect from our federal government, and fund our missions and priorities, and the people who carry them out, appropriately.

The budget resolution is only the first step in the process, and Congress will need to roll up its sleeves as they work on the appropriations bills that fund the government. FMA will continue to reach out to members on both sides of the aisle and urge them to pass appropriations bills that allow federal managers to accomplish their critical missions with sufficient resources and investment in our country's greatest assets: its people."

To read the full article, please [click here](#).

Bill to Terminate Tax Delinquent Federal Employee Issues Fails

On April 15, tax day, the House of Representatives considered legislation that would terminate federal employees considered "seriously tax delinquent." FMA sent a letter to every member of the House in opposition to the bill. Our efforts paid off, as the bill failed once again.

Meetings and Communication with Capitol Hill

While the House of Representatives and Senate were in recess for much of April, the government affairs department conducted meetings and communicated regularly with staff on key priorities for FMA.

Below are a sample of some of the meetings and interactions the FMA government affairs office had in April 2015:

- **Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee**
 - Had regular communications throughout April about the possibility of FMA National President Patricia Niehaus testifying at a committee hearing on federal employee issues in May 2015. As a result of these conversations, in early May, Niehaus received a formal invitation to testify.
- **House Oversight and Government Reform Committee (Minority Staff)**
 - The committee staff invited FMA to comment on draft legislation that would provide sexual harassment protections for unpaid interns in the federal, private, and legislative

sectors. We also discussed ways to move forward with FMA's initiative supporting first year disabled veterans in the federal workforce, the Wounded Warrior Federal Leave Act. We are currently searching for a pay-for.

- **House Oversight and Government Reform Committee (Majority Staff)**
 - We are discussing several issues with the committee, including tying the probationary period to the end of training.
- **Office of Senator Chuck Grassley (R-IA)**
 - Senator Grassley is interested in pursuing legislative changes to prevent abuse of Annual Leave. We are interested in learning more about his specific proposals and weighing in from the manager's point of view.
- **Office of Representative Derek Kilmer (D-WA)**
 - Rep. Kilmer and Rep. Walter Jones (R-NC) are leading the effort to roll back the cuts to Department of Defense TDY per diems. FMA discussed this issue with Rep. Kilmer's staff, as well as unions and industry representatives, as part of our ongoing strategy to restore the previous per diem rates.
- **Office of Senator Jon Tester (D-MT)**
 - We have been working with several staffers in Sen. Tester's office on a wide variety of issues. He is the lead sponsor of the Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act in the Senate, and we have also discussed the cuts to DOD TDY per diems. Sen. Tester is also interested in working on succession planning, which is an FMA issue brief. We met with his staff to discuss FMA's ideas and how we can assist the Senator in his efforts.