

MEMORANDUM

To: FMA Regional Directors

From: Greg Stanford and Katie Maddocks

Re: FMA Government Affairs Update for August 2015

Date: September 1, 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 August 2015 on behalf of FMA members. Please share this information with chapter presidents, legislative action team leaders and others in your region.

Congress in Recess

Congress traditionally uses the month of August for a District Work Period, so Representatives and Senators are not in Washington, D.C. Both chambers will return for legislative business on Tuesday, September 8.

AFGE Hit List at the Department of Veterans Affairs

In late July, we learned that a local of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) produced a 39 page report of managers and executives they wanted fired at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), which was shared with VA Secretary Bob McDonald. In response, FMA and the Senior Executives Association (SEA) sent a joint letter to congressional committees asking for an investigation of this action. In part, we seek answers to questions such as:

- Did this “internal review” occur by union officials on official time?
- Where did the union get its training to conduct an internal review?
- Did it take sworn statements and on whose authority?
- Did it interview executives and managers to prepare a balanced report?

When contacted by the press, FMA Director of Government Affairs Greg Stanford noted that FMA works regularly with AFGE and other unions as part of the Federal-Postal Coalition, and remains in lock step on issues such as protecting pay and benefits.

Probationary Period



As we noted in the July Government Affairs Update, Representative Ken Buck (R-CO) introduced legislation (H.R. 3023) that would extend the probationary period from two years from the completion of training. In August, we learned that the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee plans to consider this legislation, either as a stand-alone bill or as part of a larger bill on federal employee issues, in September. FMA met with majority and minority committee staff in August to discuss our position on the probationary period.

Annual Agency Outreach

In August FMA sent its annual outreach letter to agency and department heads to let them know who FMA is and what the association does on behalf of managers across the government. The letter has prompted several responses to date from senior officials interested in meeting with FMA National President Patricia Niehaus. These meetings give FMA a chance to broaden the association's membership and activity. Thus far, we have heard from the Department of the Army, IRS, the Federal Elections Commission, the Peace Corps, USAID, and the Office of Government Ethics. FMA will meet with these agencies and departments over the next months in order to explore the possibility of creating new chapters.

Across-the-board Pay Raise

On Friday, the Office of Personnel Management announced the President plans to put into place a one percent raise for all federal employees. In November, locality pay rates are also to increase, which would provide a cumulative pay raise of 1.3 percent. At this time there is no vocal opposition from Members of Congress.