

MEMORANDUM

To: FMA Regional Directors

From: Greg Stanford and Katie Maddocks

Re: FMA Government Affairs Update for January 2016

Date: February 10, 2016

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 January 2016 on behalf of FMA members. Please share this information with chapter presidents, legislative action team leaders and others in your region.

2016 FMA Issue Briefs

The government affairs team held two conference calls to discuss the draft 2016 Issue Briefs. The calls gave all members a chance to engage in dialogue on many of the legislative priorities FMA works on throughout the year. The Issue Briefs will be available on FMA's website and will be distributed at the 78th annual national convention for the association's *Day on the Hill*.

National Convention Keynote Speakers Finalized

In January, we finalized the two keynote speakers who will address attendees at the national convention, which will be held in Alexandria, Virginia, March 13-16, 2016. Office of Personnel (OPM) Management Director Beth Cobert will speak on Monday, March 14, while Representative Stephen Lynch (D-MA) will appear on Tuesday, March 15. Cobert took over at OPM following former Director Katherine Archuleta's resignation in July 2015. Representative Lynch has long been a champion of federal employee issues, and was the lead sponsor of the FMA-originated Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act, which was signed into law in November 2015.

National President Visit

FMA National President Patricia Niehaus visited Washington, D.C., during the week of January 18. Greg and Katie set up meetings with key staff of both the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee and the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, the two committees with primary jurisdiction over federal employee issues.

- Office of Sen. Jon Tester (D-MT)

- Administrative Leave Act: Senators Jon Tester (D-MT) and Charles Grassley (R-IA) introduced bipartisan legislation. FMA worked closely with both offices in the drafting of the legislative language and endorsed the bill, which provides clear definitions of administrative leave, how it is to be used, and for how long. The Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee (HSGAC), committee of jurisdiction, is expected to take up the bill on February 10.
- HSGAC Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management, Minority
 - In March, the subcommittee hopes to hold a roundtable discussion on USAJobs
 - Possible hearings held on hiring, specifically on how the federal government can attract millennials to the workforce.
- HSGAC Chairman and Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management, Majority
 - Committee Markup on February 10, which is expected to have legislation on Supervisor Training and Probationary Period
 - Bill would mandate training for those appointed to supervisor positions, and call for a one year probationary period to begin after an agency's training period is completed
 - There is concern on backlash from unions, specifically on probationary period and how agencies will define how long training will last
- Oversight and Government Reform (OGR) Minority
 - Discussion of House version of Administrative Leave, which was initially brought up during a January 12 committee markup, however was pulled after there was concern over language from both the Republicans and Democrats, who are now working together to develop a bill both sides can agree on
 - The House is also taking up the probationary period, as introduced by Representative Ken Buck (R-CO), H.R. 3023, which calls for a two year probationary period after training is complete. The Minority has concern over how training will be defined by agencies.
- OGR Majority
 - In January, the Government Managers Coalition, which FMA is a member, issued a letter to OGR commenting on how H.R. 3023 does not provide the necessary flexibilities to agencies during training and probationary periods, stating, "A one-

size-fits-all probationary period does not reflect the complexity of duties and skill sets in the federal workforce.” There was disappointment from the Majority that GMC did not fully support the bill.

- While OGR Majority appreciates the language in the Senate Administrative Leave Act, they feel it’s too complicated.
- National Council on Federal Labor-Management Relations
 - During the first meeting of 2016, Council members brought up the fact that they often face a problem connecting metrics and improvements. The concern lies with that not enough federal employees are questioned about pre-decisional involvement, skewing the metrics. In order to combat this problem, the Council will examine how to better disseminate the value of pre-decisional involvement and how federal employees can share their personal experiences. By having a better pool of data, the Council will gain a better understanding of how pre-decisional involvement is used across the government.

Your Turn with Mike Causey

- On January 13, Katie Maddocks spoke on *Your Turn with Mike Causey* on Federal News Radio, www.fednewsradio.com
- Topics included: the future of the federal workforce, supervisory training, the probationary period, administrative leave, the Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act, and the FMA annual National Convention and Management Training Seminar in March.