



FMA GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS UPDATE
April 8, 2016

To: All Members of the Federal Managers Association

From: Greg Stanford, Director of Government Affairs

I am pleased to be directly communicating with you today. 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 over the last month on behalf of FMA members. Since September 2013, the office has produced this memo and provided it to FMA Region Directors, who then forwarded it to Chapter leadership. During the March Executive Board meeting, to speed and improve communication, we unanimously decided to send this report directly to all FMA members.

The goal of this report is to share more directly what FMA's professional staff is doing on behalf of FMA members. Our vision is for this report to succeed the Washington Report, with a more FMA-centric message. Information formerly found in the Washington Report will always be available on FMA's website, in sections such as In the News, Press Releases, and FMA Working for You. The website is updated daily with articles on important issues and what's affecting feds. I encourage you to visit www.fedmanagers.org on a regular basis.

Please feel free to provide feedback any time by emailing me at gstanford@fedmanagers.org or by calling the national office at (703) 683-8700. Thank you for your membership in FMA. It's an honor to represent your interests in Washington, D.C.

78th National Convention and Management Training Seminar

The Federal Managers Association hosted its 78th annual National Convention and Management Training Seminar, titled, Federal Managers—Developing and Engaging the Workforce, to prepare not only its members, but all federal managers, for obstacles they face. From March 13-16, at the Crowne Plaza Old Town Alexandria Hotel in Alexandria, Virginia, members discussed best practices in various federal departments and agencies, as well as hindrances faced. This was a wonderful opportunity for FMA members to hear about the good works of their fellow managers and supervisors as they aspire to ensure a fully functioning federal workforce. Additionally, the conference provided an opportunity for members to meet their elected officials to share their experiences as federal managers.

Resolution

The assembled membership adopted a resolution submitted by Chapter 125 seeking to allow federal employees who are members of the Reserves to be eligible to enroll in Tricare Reserve Select for their health benefits:

WHEREAS: If a member of the reserves is working in a regular, non-federal employee job, they can opt for Tricare Reserve Select at a low rate of premiums.

WHEREAS: A federal employee who serves in the reserves is not eligible to enroll in Tricare Select and is required to enroll in the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program (FEHBP).

WHEREAS: FEHB rates are significantly higher than those of Tricare Reserve Select.

WHEREAS: Reserve service members are penalized for serving their country if they work as both a federal employee and a reservist.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

To correct this inequity, FMA will actively support allowing federal employees who are also members of the Army National Guard, Army Reserve, Navy Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve, or U.S. Coast Guard Reserve, the option to elect into Tricare Reserve Select for their health benefits.

Keynote Speakers

Federal Labor Relations Authority Chairman Carol Waller Pope and Representative Stephen Lynch (D-MA) served as keynote speakers for the convention. Pope kicked off the convention with encouraging words on leadership and engagement. Representative Lynch championed FMA's homegrown initiative, the Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act, which was signed into law (P.L. 114-75) in November 2015. During his remarks, Rep. Lynch spoke about drafting additional legislation in the House of Representatives that would extend wounded warriors leave to employees not covered by the original bill. P.L. 114-75 does not apply to non-title 5 federal employees such as those at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

Day on the Hill

The final day of the Convention allowed for Association members to meet with their Representative and Senators on Capitol Hill, sharing their personal experiences working for the federal government, as well as addressing the FMA national legislative agenda. Feedback from the annual *Day on the Hill* included many positive reports on issues such as providing FERS enrollees with the same service credit benefits as CSRS and military retirees, repealing the DOD



cuts to long term TDY per diems, and supervisory training. The new resolution to allow feds who are in the Reserves and Tricare also received a favorable response from initial introduction meetings.

FEHB Program Advisory Group

Director of Government Affairs Greg Stanford represented FMA at the spring meeting of the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program Advisory Group at the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) headquarters. Topics of discussion included the rollout of Self Plus One, an FMA priority which was made available for the 2016 plan year, results of the 2015 Federal Employee Benefits Survey, and the 2017 Call Letter.

FMA's seat on the FEHB Program Advisory Group gives the Association direct access to the senior leadership at OPM on FEHB matters. If you ever have questions or concerns about FEHB, we are happy to share them with these decision makers.

Competitive Service Act Signed Into Law

On March 18, President Barack Obama signed the Competitive Service Act (S. 1580) into law.

FMA testified on behalf of the legislation before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on Federal Management while the bill was still in draft form. FMA worked with Senator Jon Tester (D-MT) on the language, endorsed the legislation upon introduction, and contacted members of both the House and Senate urging its adoption. The legislation ultimately passed both chambers of Congress with unanimous support.

House Budget Resolution

In March, details emerged on what is included in the House Budget Resolution for fiscal year 2017. Like FY2016's resolution, this year's version again proposes increases to pension contributions for all federal employees – not just new hires – reductions to rate of return to the Thrift Savings Plan G-Fund, and 10% attrition across the federal government.

FMA was successful in our opposition to all of these efforts last year, and will continue to vocally oppose them for FY2017.

Update on Department of Defense Long Term TDY Per Diem Issue

FMA staff attended meetings with senior staff of the Senate Defense Appropriations Committee, as well as additional offices of members of the Senate Armed Services Committee as part of the Association's ongoing effort to repeal cuts to long term TDY per diems the Department of Defense implemented in November 2014. As noted in previous government affairs updates,

FMA is working on this issue together with AFGE, IFPTE, and hotel and lodging industries. FMA and these groups are pushing for a full repeal in both the FY17 appropriations and NDAA. Leadership from NAVSEA requested of the Secretary of Defense a waiver from the cuts and a select group of Senators who represent naval shipyards for a waiver as well for naval defense civilian employees.

On April 5, a bipartisan group of senators led by Sen. Kelly Ayotte (R-NH) introduced legislation (S. 2749) that would exempt shipyard employees from the DOD reductions. The bill has eleven cosponsors, including every senator in a state that represents a federal shipyard:

Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME), Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA), Sen. Tim Kaine (D-VA), Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-WA), Sen. Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Sen. Brian Schatz (D-HI), Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA), Sen. Angus King (I-ME), Sen. Mike Rounds (R-SD), and Sen. Thom Tillis (R-NC).

While FMA will continue to work on a full repeal for all DOD employees, we are supportive of S. 2749.

Administrative Leave Bill Passes House Committee

The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee passed the bipartisan Administrative Leave Reform Act (H.R. 4359), which places a time limit of 14 days for how long a federal employee can be placed on administrative leave. Rep. Stephen Lynch (D-MA), FMA's keynote speaker at the 78th national convention, provided an amendment to the bill that would allow the employee to return to work or telework if an agency cannot make a decision on an investigation within 14 days. If a decision has not been made and the employee on administrative leave poses a risk to the agency, the agency can use an additional 30 days of leave.

As you may already know, the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee passed a separate bill reforming administrative leave, the Administrative Leave Act (S. 2450), in February of this year.

FMA met with staff in the U.S. Senate in March to discuss strategies to find consensus between the House and Senate approaches.

Senator Hirono Introduces legislation to extend Wounded Warriors leave to FAA Employees

In March, Sen. Mazie Hirono (D-HI) introduced the Federal Aviation Administration Veteran Transition Improvement Act of 2016 (S. 2683), which would extend "Wounded Warriors Leave" – created by Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act – to eligible employees at the FAA. S. 2683 is cosponsored by Sen. Deb Fischer (R-NE).



As noted above, the original Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act does not apply to non-title 5 employees, including employees at the FAA or TSA. FMA is proud to support Senator Hirono's effort and endorsed her bill. We will also continue to work with Representative Lynch on his efforts in the House.

House Bill Eases Hiring of Temporary Employees in DOD

In order to help temporary employees within the Department of Defense (DOD) move to permanent employment, Representative Markwayne Mullin (R-OK) introduced the Department of Defense Workforce Flexibility Act (H.R. 4687). The bill has two cosponsors, Rep. Steve Russell (R-OK) and Rep. Jim Bridenstine (R-OK).

The legislation would allow temporary DOD employees to apply for vacant, permanent positions under the same procedure that permanent workers use for internal merit-based promotions. The Federal Managers Association Chapter 34, McAlester Army Ammunition Plant, worked closely with Representative Mullin on drafting this bill. H.R. 4687 was referred to the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, and FMA's national office plans to meet with congressional staff in April to discuss strategies for moving this commonsense bill forward.

FMA on Federal News Radio

FMA Deputy Director of Government Affairs Katie Maddocks appeared on *Your Turn with Mike Causey* on Federal News Radio on Wednesday, March 16. [You can listen to a broadcast of this show here.](#)

Reminder

For the latest information from FMA on issues affecting your paycheck, workplace and livelihood, please visit www.fedmanagers.org.

You can expect the next FMA Government Affairs Report on May 6. Thanks for reading!