

February 3, 2025

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

I write on behalf of the managers, supervisors, and executives in the federal government whose interests are represented by the Federal Managers Association (FMA). We want to congratulate you on your return to the White House. As we did during your first term, we look forward to working with you and your administration.

Our mission at FMA is advocating excellence in public service. Those who enter the federal workforce often note a greater calling to serve their fellow Americans and their country. Managers on the frontlines of the noble agencies and departments that make up federal government are, and will continue to be, the primary leaders providing services to the American people.

Founded at the Washington Navy Yard in 1913, FMA is the oldest and largest professional nonprofit membership organization representing managers across the federal workforce. We work with legislators on both sides of the aisle to empower federal managers. Our members come from more than forty different agencies and departments, including active and retired feds. FMA pushes for investment in federal employees, giving managers the tools they need to effectively operate, and securing policies to attract and retain the best and brightest to civil service.

Empowering Federal Managers

Pursuant to those goals, FMA broadly supported many principles in Executive Order 13839, titled "[Promoting Accountability and Streamlining Removal Procedures Consistent with Merit System Principles](#)," which you issued in your first term. Specifically, we supported:

- Minimizing the burden on supervisors when addressing poor performers;
- The penalty for an instance of misconduct should be tailored to the facts and circumstances and not require progressive discipline;
- Disciplinary action should be calibrated to the specific facts and circumstances of each individual employee's situation; and,
- When taking disciplinary action, agencies should have discretion to take into account an employee's disciplinary record and past work record, including all past misconduct.

Extend Probationary Period

FMA supports renewed action providing supervisors and managers these and other tools to address poor performers, provided they are consistent with merit-system principles. We also

support allowing federal agencies the flexibility to extend the probationary period for employees entering the civil service to two years from date of hire. Many federal agencies employ labor forces requiring specialized technical skills to carry out their duties. New employees must often master broad and complex procedures and policies to meet their agencies' missions, necessitating several months of formal training followed by long periods of on-the-job instruction. To ensure each manager and supervisor oversees a workforce that exhibits the abilities required to execute its objectives, lawmakers must afford federal agencies the latitude to extend the probationary period beyond the current length of only one year.

Hiring Reform

We also support many of the ideas included in your Executive Order “[Reforming the Federal Hiring Process and Restoring Merit to Government Service](#),” including reducing time-to-hire, better communication with job applicants throughout the hiring process, and better utilization of technology in the hiring and selection process. We appreciate your leadership on these issues.

Schedule Policy/Career

We also wish to voice due process concerns regarding the Executive Order creating Schedule Policy/Career, which turns many thousands of feds into at-will employees with limited protections. We at FMA know it is absolutely necessary to maintain a non-political civil service. A hallmark of America's civil service is the foundational, fundamental understanding that federal employees swear an oath to the Constitution and provide services to all Americans, regardless of political party. The federal government cannot function effectively without this nonpolitical civil service capable of preserving institutional memory and competence across administrations. We therefore adamantly oppose Schedule Policy/Career.

Telework

We also have objections to the Return-to-Work Executive Order issued on January 20, 2025. Telework and remote work have been shown to be viable and sustainable options for many in the federal workforce, and should be continued. Many of the benefits of telework are well known, including a reduction of the federal footprint, environmental benefits from less commuters on the roads, and potentially increased productivity. We note there will always be jobs where telework simply is not an option – more than 53 percent of federal workers are not eligible to telework due to the nature of their jobs. One cannot turn a screwdriver on an aircraft carrier or work on classified documents from the couch in one's living room.

Given the flexibilities that technology allows us, it is critical that the federal government continue to adapt and take advantage of the opportunities telework provides. If done properly, telework can help the federal government compete in attracting the best and the brightest. FMA supports the Telework Reform Act (S. 82), sponsored by Sen. James Lankford (R-OK), which would collect important data, including expected cost savings and productivity outcomes related to remote work and telework. Importantly, it would also enhance training, monitoring, accountability, and reporting. Among its specific provisions, S. 82 would:

- Require telework and remote work agreements between employees and agencies be renewed on an annual basis, including a review of agency needs;
- Require employees to take telework training every year;
- Require biannual surveys on telework usage; and,
- Require an annual review of telework guidelines by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

We at FMA believe the provisions included in this legislation would strengthen telework to ensure positive outcomes for agency missions, federal employees, and most importantly, effective service for American taxpayers.

Working Together

Thank you for your consideration of the Federal Managers Association's views. We look forward to meeting with leaders of both OMB and OPM to facilitate communications and collaboration. If you have any questions, please contact FMA Director of Government and Public Affairs Greg Stanford at gstanford@fedmanagers.org or (703) 683-8700, ext. 104.

Sincerely,



Craig Carter
National President