

October 29, 2014

The Honorable Hal Rogers, Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
H- 307 United States Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey, Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 205105

Dear Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Lowey,

On behalf of the over 200,000 managers and supervisors currently serving our nation in the federal government and whose interests are represented by the Federal Managers Association (FMA), I express my concern of recent cuts to temporary duty assignment (TDY) per diem allowances as called for by the Department of Defense (DOD). In order to combat restrictive budgets, department leaders have instituted drastic cuts to long-term TDY that will take effect November 1, 2014. Civilian defense employees on TDY between 30 and 180 days will see a reduction by 25 percent, while those over 180 days will face a 45 percent reduction.

These extreme cuts will create undue financial burdens on these dedicated employees who will struggle to meet these per diem requirements or will be forced to make up any cost differences out of their own pockets due to the fact that these new rates will price them out of markets. Federal workers are still trying to financially recover from the three year pay freeze, furloughs caused by sequestration, a government shutdown, and dwindling employee morale throughout military installations. The Department's budgetary solution should not lie on the backs of its employees.

Further concerning is DOD's proposed cuts are not in line with the General Service Administration's Government-Wide Travel Advisory Committee, which sets per diem rates based on data-driven calculations. Per diem rates are set based upon contractor-provided average daily rate data of local lodging properties. All rates are evaluated to ensure that they are fair and equitable. DOD did not utilize this method when establishing new TDY per diem allowance rates.

I encourage you to examine these costs during the appropriations process and their detrimental effects on the civilian military workforce, and stop any further reductions to per diem allowances within DOD. Thank you for your support of the men and women in the civilian defense sector. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact FMA's Government Affairs Director Greg Stanford at gstanford@fedmanagers.org or (703) 683-8700.

Sincerely,



Patricia J. Niehaus
National President

Cc: House Appropriations Committee Members