

December 14, 2015

The Honorable Brian Schatz
722 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Schatz and Senator Collins,

On behalf of the managers and supervisors currently serving our nation in the federal government and whose interests are represented by the Federal Managers Association (FMA), I would like to extend my deepest gratitude for reaching out to leadership of the Senate Appropriations Committee, requesting to repeal cuts to temporary duty assignment (TDY) per diem allowances as implemented by the Department of Defense (DOD). The majority of FMA's members are civilian employees within the nation's naval shipyards who often volunteer for TDY in order to ensure the missions and goals of DOD are met.

As you know, in order to combat restrictive budgets, department leaders instituted drastic cuts to long-term TDY on November 1, 2014. Civilian defense employees on TDY between 30 and 180 days saw a reduction by 25 percent, while those over 180 days face a 45 percent reduction. These extreme cuts put undue financial burdens on these dedicated employees who struggle to meet these per diem requirements or are 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. Hotel industry representatives commented they currently face 80 percent capacity; they do not need the business of the federal government. Additionally, TDY service is voluntary. FMA is already seeing its members reluctant to serve TDY as they already have mortgages, car payments, and child care costs at home. As many of your constituents and FMA members serve at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard, FMA appreciates your efforts to ensure TDY per diem allowances are fully funded.

FMA was pleased to see that the House fiscal year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act included a repeal of these drastic cuts. We applaud the members of the House Armed Services Committee who recognize how detrimental these cuts are to DOD's missions and goals. While this language was not included in the Senate version of the bill, as Members of Congress move forward on current spending levels, it is FMA's hope that TDY per diem allowances will be restored.

Thank you for your continued support and leadership on this matter. Federal workers are still trying to financially recover from the three year pay freeze; furloughs caused by sequestration; and, a government shutdown. Civilian defense employees are dedicated men and women and should not shoulder the burden of departmental cost cutting. 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